HISTORY

OF

THE POLITICKS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND FRANCE,

VINDICATED

FROM

A LATE ATTACK

OF

MR. WILLIAM BELSHAM.

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INTRODUCTION.

AS the following Vindication may fall into the hands of perſons who have never read the Hiſtory of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, it will not be improper, before I enter on my Defence, to ſtate the principal facts, which were ſucceſſively proved by authentic documents, in the ſixteen chapters, of which that work is compoſed.

1. In the celebrated conference at Pillnitz in Auguſt, 1791, the Britiſh Government took not the moſt diſtant part: and if any treaty was concluded there, which is itſelf a matter of great doubt, the Britiſh Government not only never acceded to it, but was never appriſed even of its contents.— Further, when the Britiſh Government was requeſted in 1791 to join a coalition againſt France, it gave a poſitive and unequivocal refuſal.

 2. Toward

2. Toward the cloſe of the ſame year the valuable colony of St. Domingo was preſerved to France by the timely aſſiſtance ſent by Lord Effingham, then Governor of Jamaica: and the Britiſh Cabinet ſignified through its Ambaſſador at Paris to the French Government, that it fully approved of Lord Effingham's conduct. At the ſame time, true to the ſtricteſt principles of honour and neutrality, it refuſed the advantageous offer made by the French coloniſts, who were highly diſſatisfied with the National Aſſembly, to ſurrender the French part of St. Domingo to the Crown of Britain. And theſe acts of generoſity were repaid by France with the utmoſt ingratitude.

3. When Louis XVI. formally accepted the new conſtitution, in September, 1791, and ſent circular letters to the different Courts of Europe ſignifying his aſſent, the Court of Great Britain was one of the firſt which returned an anſwer; and the anſwer was couched in very reſpectful terms, whereas ſome other courts either did not anſwer

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at all, or in a manner diſpleaſing to the National Aſſembly. Yet, on the other hand, an event took place about this very time, which ſhewed how very little the National Aſſembly cared about the neutrality of Great Britain.

4. When Parliament aſſembled in January, 1792, the Britiſh Cabinet was ſo far from diſplaying any hoſtile views, that it was propoſed, in his Majeſty's ſpeech, to make an immediate reduction of the forces both by ſea and by land. The number of ſeamen and marines, to be employed that year, was accordingly diminiſhed to ſixteen thouſand: it was determined that the Heſſian ſubſidy, which then expired, ſhould not be renewed: the Britiſh land forces were likewiſe reduced: and taxes to the amount of two hundred thouſand pounds were aboliſhed. Yet at this very time the National Aſſembly took meaſures for a very conſiderable augmentation of the French marine; meaſures which, had they been taken in England, would have been repreſented in France as acts of hoſtility. But our Miniſ-

ters did not ſuffer themſelves to be diſturbed in their ſyſtem of neutrality.

5. After France had declared war againſt Auſtria, on the 20th of April, 1792; the Britiſh Government proved, both by its actions and declarations, that it was determined to remain neutral in the conteſt between the two powers. The French Miniſter in London, Chauvelin, ſent official information, on the 28th of April, to his Court, that the Britiſh Cabinet was reſolved to preſerve neutrality: and, on the firſt of May, the King of France wrote a letter of thanks to his Britannic Majeſty, and acknowledged his obligations for the refuſal to join the coalition. On the 15th of May, Mr. Chauvelin delivered a note, in which, after an attempt at a juſtification of the National Aſſembly in declaring war againſt Auſtria, the Britiſh Government was requeſted to forbid all Britiſh ſubjects to accept of commiſſions from any power which was hoſtile to France. This requeſt was punctually complied with, and a Royal proclamation to that purpoſe was iſſued on the 25th of May. At this

friendly conduct the French Government again expressed its satisfaction.

6. The proclamation of the 21st of May was a mere matter of national police, which the machinations then at work to overturn the British Constitution rendered absolutely necessary: it contained nothing which could give the least offence to the French Government, which was not even named in it: it contained no indications whatsoever of a hostile disposition to that country: nor did any such thought occur to the French Government, but on the contrary, not only Mr. Chauvelin, in a note which he delivered three weeks afterward, but Le Brun himself, in the name even of the *new* government, in the month of August, testified his conviction of the friendly disposition and conduct of the British Cabinet toward France.

7. When the British Cabinet, on July 8, in answer to the proposal to act as mediator between France and the other Belligerent Powers, replied, that it could not do so, unless the mediation were requested by *all* the

parties concerned, the refusal was so far from indicating a disposition to hostilities, that it proved the very reverse: and this is confirmed by Mr. Chauvelin's acknowledgment in his letter of July 17, and by the acknowledgment of Le Brun, in his note to Lord Gower. Besides, the mediation was requested in the name of the King of France, at a time when his authority was expiring: and though he was not *formally* deposed before the 10th of August, yet the events of the 20th of June had transferred the whole power of France, executive as well as legislative, to the National Assembly: and this assembly was so far from being solicitous for peace, as certain persons have very falsely, and very artfully, asserted, in order to throw the blame of the war on the British Government, that it was determined, at all events, to prosecute the war.

8. When an alarm was spread in France, in July, 1792, in consequence of the sailing of five ships of the line, and a few frigates, from Portsmouth, merely to perform naval evolutions in the channel, Mr. Chauvelin sent

a note to his own Government, in which he teſtified the pacific diſpoſitions of the Britiſh Cabinet, and even complained of the falſe notions which were entertained on this ſubject. On the 4th of Auguſt, Mr. Chauvelin's note was read in the National Aſſembly: and it was declared that Mr. Chauvelin's teſtimony to the pacific diſpoſitions of the Britiſh Cabinet was ſatisfactory.

9. The recall of the Britiſh Ambaſſador from Paris, after the King had been dethroned, was no breach of neutrality toward France, either in itſelf, or in the manner in which it was conducted. As he had been accredited to the King, his letters of credence were become uſeleſs: and before a new diplomatic connexion could be formed, it was neceſſary firſt to know who was to govern France in future. But, at that time, all authorities were organized only proviſionally: and, during the ſtruggle of contending parties, it was moſt conſiſtent with the principles of neutrality to await the iſſue of it. Beſides, the letter of recall was couched in ſuch pacific and friendly terms, that Le Brun

openly

openly teſtified his approbation of it, and declared, in the National Aſſembly, that the Britiſh Ambaſſador had left a ſatisfactory teſtimony of the diſpoſitions of his court. The pacific diſpoſition of the Britiſh Court was further evinced by the deciſive rejection of the invitation, which was made at that very time, as it had been already in the preceding year, to join the coalition. But that the Proviſional Executive Council might not be wanting in etiquette; it immediately diſpatched Mr. Noel with an order to Mr. Chauvelin to return to Paris. Mr. Chauvelin, however, obtained a revocation of the order, in conſequence of his making the following remonſtrance; "that he was perfectly well with Mr. Fox, and ſome other members of Oppoſition, and that it would not be prudent in France to loſe the fruits of his labours with theſe gentlemen, and their ſubſequent ſervices, for a vain form of diplomatic etiquette."

10. In the month of November, 1792, after the Dutchy of Savoy, the Auſtrian Netherlands, and a part of Germany, had been conquered,

conquered, the French rulers threw off the mafk, and declared to the whole world the revolutionizing fyftem which they had hitherto only followed in the dark. Not only was it decreed, on the 19th of November, that all nations which chofe to rebel againft their governments fhould receive affiftance from France, but, on the 28th of November, when deputies from certain Britifh focieties appeared at the bar of the National Convention, and fignified their intention of overturning the Britifh Conftitution, they were received with applaufe from the whole Affembly, and were affured by the Prefident himfelf, that the period was not far diftant, when Frenchmen would come to congratulate the National Convention of Great Britain. After this declaration, it ought no longer to be a queftion: Who were the aggreffors? Further, toward the clofe of the year 1792, England was overrun with French emiffaries, who were engaged in the plot for the overthrow of the Britifh Conftitution, and were fupplied, for that purpofe, with immenfe fums from the French Government.

ment. A confiderable fleet alfo was fitted out in France three months before Great Britain even began to arm.

11. When the Britifh Parliament affembled in the month of December, in confequence of the danger, with which the country was threatened from France, all the meafures, which were taken, were purely defenfive: and a war might have eafily been avoided, had it been the will of the National Convention, and of the Executive Council.

12. While meafures were taking in Great Britain, in order to ward off the danger, with which it was already threatened, the rulers of France continued to augment that danger: and, by a new feries of injuries and infults proved their determination to engage in a war with Great Britain and Holland. By the decree of December 15, war was declared, not only on all kings, but on all nations, which refufed to take up arms againft them: and this decree, with that of November 19, was, in various ways, applied to Great Britain in particular. The Minifter

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for Foreign Affairs threatened, in the National Convention, an appeal to the Britiſh Nation, and the Marine Miniſter publickly proclaimed the deſign of a landing in Britain with fifty thouſand caps of liberty. A new and very conſiderable addition was ordered to be made to the French ſhips already in commiſſion, with the avowed view of acting againſt Great Britain: and, before the middle of January, the order was ſigned for the actual invaſion of Holland.

13. In the diplomatic communications between Great Britain and France, the Britiſh Miniſters diſplayed no unwillingneſs to negotiate: and, though no negotiation could be conſidered at that time as ſtrictly official, Mr. Chauvelin's credentials having been received from the depoſed King of France, yet he was aſſured by Lord Grenville, that outward forms would be no hindrance to his Britannic Majeſty, whenever the queſtion related to explanations which might be ſatisfactory and beneficial to both parties. Mr. Pitt, likewiſe, in a conference which he had with Mr. Maret, expreſſed his readineſs to

negotiate with Mr. Maret as a confidential perſon of the French Executive Council; but this Council not only refuſed to grant inſtructions to Mr. Maret, but forbad him even to converſe with Mr. Pitt on political ſubjects. When the negotiation was conducted between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, the notes which were delivered, on the part of the French Government, were ſo far from containing ſatisfactory explanations, that a firm reſolution was avowed in them of continuing thoſe very aggreſſions of which the Britiſh Government complained. And when, notwithſtanding this avowal, the Executive Council endeavoured, by all the arts of ſophiſtry, to impoſe a belief of its pacific intentions, its actions uniformly contradicted its aſſertions. Nor was it aſhamed to utter the moſt ſolemn declarations, even with the conſciouſneſs of their falſehood. Its whole mode of conducting the negotiation, betrayed as much inſolence as hypocriſy: and an appeal to the people of Great Britain was threatened in the very firſt note. On the other hand, the conditions of peace, pro-

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pofed by the Britifh Government, had no reference whatfoever to any particular form of government in France; they related only to the external power of that country; they were abfolutely neceffary for the falvation of Britain; and were fo far from being degrading to France, that they required only an adherence to that principle, which the republican rulers had repeatedly declared to be the bafis of their fyftem of politicks. Thefe conditions were rejected: and at the fame time it was announced, that, if the preparations then making in the Britifh ports (which had been ordered merely in felf-defence, and which could not poffibly be ftopt, after the Executive Council had rejected the conditions, which alone could infure fafety to Great Britain) were ftill continued, a declaration of war would be the confequence. It was no longer in the power, therefore, of the Britifh Government to avoid a rupture with France.

14. A war with Great Britain had been refolved on in the French Cabinet, not only before the negotiation was ended, but even before

before it commenced: and the object of the Executive Council was not to produce a reconciliation, but to amuse the British Government, and to deceive the nation, till the plan which had been laid for the destruction of the British empire, was fully ripe for execution. The mad ambition of the French rulers, their determination to extirpate all kingly governments, and the confident expectation of insurrections in every part of Europe, aided by the necessity of finding employment for their turbulent armies, were their motives to war in general: and their firm belief, that, the inhabitants of Great Britain were so disaffected to their Government, that French assistance would induce them to an immediate revolt, the inconsiderable number of troops at that time in Great Britain, in comparison with those which could easily be spared from France, the forward state of the French navy, the persuasion that a landing on the British coast would be attended with no difficulty, and the immense advantages expected from the acquisition of the British wealth, commerce and marine, in the prosecution

ſecution of their conqueſts on the continent, all theſe motives, added to the innate deſire of cruſhing an ancient and formidable, but at that time deſpiſed rival, induced them to a war with Great Britain in particular.

15. The events of the laſt fourteen days, before the declaration of war, cannot poſſibly be numbered among the cauſes of it, because the war was already determined. As to the negotiation, attempted by General Dumouriez, it had no other object than to amuſe the Britiſh and Dutch governments a little longer: and, though both governments gave their conſent to it, the National Convention refuſed to await the iſſue of it, and declared war unanimouſly on Great Britain and Holland.

16. The pretexts alleged by the National Convention, to juſtify the declaration of hoſtilities, were either futile or falſe, or were events, which had not taken place, till after a war with Great Britain and Holland had been reſolved on. Laſtly, though the two great parties in France, the Girondiſts and the Jacobins, formed a junction on the

 queſtion

queſtion of a war with Great Britain: yet, as ſoon as they found that it did not anſwer their expectations, they accuſed each other of having been the authors of it. And this mutual accuſation is a tacit acknowledgement from both parties, that the blame did not attach to the Britiſh Government.

After a ſtatement of theſe premiſes, all of which were proved by unanſwerable documents, in the Hiſtory of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, every ſhadow of doubt muſt be removed in regard to the origin of that war, which was declared by the National Convention on the 1ſt of February, 1793. It was a war of aggreſſion, of injury, and of inſult, on the part of France, as well in the motives which gave it birth, as in the open declaration of it: and, on the part of Britain, it was juſt and neceſſary, as being ſtrictly a war of ſelf-defence.

VINDICATION.

THE inference, which has been juſt drawn at the cloſe of the Introduction, appears to be the unavoidable reſult of the preceding ſtatement; and unleſs an adverſary can prove, that the facts themſelves are unfounded, it ſeems uſeleſs to perſiſt in denying the conſequence. Now Mr. Belſham is ſo far from having called my facts in queſtion, (which indeed he knew was impracticable, as they were founded on official documents) that he has made many remarkable conceſſions in regard to points, on which the gentlemen of his party uſed very ſtrenuouſly to inſiſt. Inſtead of aſſerting that the coalition in 1791 was formed by the intrigues of the Britiſh cabinet, he very fairly admits, that the part which it acted on that occaſion, was " rather *friendly* than

 inimical

inimical to France.* He allows that his Majesty's speech at the opening of Parliament on Jan. 31, 1792, was "penned in a truly *pacific spirit*:"† he even says that "the disposition of the British ministry at this time was *unquestionably pacific*:"‡ and he admits, not merely the falsehood of the report, that the British government acceded to the treaty of Pavia, but the spuriousness of the treaty itself.§ He makes no scruple to assert, that, when the British cabinet, after the declaration of war against Austria, still maintained its professions of neutrality, Mr. Chauvelin the French Ambassador, appeared to be perfectly satisfied with their *sincerity*.‖ Instead of representing the celebrated Proclamation of May 21, 1792, as a libel against France, Mr. Belsham very ingenuously says, that "it *ought not*, and in fact *did not* give the least offence to the French government.¶ He totally discards the well-known story of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Maret, though it has been fre-

* P. 5. † P. 8. ‡ Ib. § Ib. ‖ P. 10.
¶ P. 12.

quently urged even in Parliament, as one of the ſtrongeſt proofs, that we were the aggreſſors in the preſent war: he even grants that the charge muſt be inverted, that it was Mr. Pitt, and not Le Brun, who propoſed a negotiation with Mr. Maret;* and that its failure aroſe from the refuſal of the French miniſter to grant inſtructions, not from any refuſal of the Britiſh miniſter to accept them.† He further ſays, "it is much to be wiſhed that the *requeſt of Mr. Pitt* had been complied with:"‡ and, though an adverſary, he has borne honourable teſtimony to the "*real deſire of peace* which actuated," even in December 1792, the miniſter of Great Britain.§

On the other hand Mr. Belſham une-

* Namely in Dec. 1792.

† P. 81. ‡ Ib.

§ Ib. He ſays again, p. 114, that Mr. Pitt "*certainly wiſhed for peace*:" and there the ſubject relates to the end of January 1793, juſt before the French declared war. Mr. B. therefore acknowledges, that Mr. Pitt, in his deſire for the preſervation of peace, was firm to the very laſt.

quivocally admits, that, when the Parliament met in December 1792, the conduct of the French "afforded *just and weighty* grounds of complaint."* He does not deny that the French Convention permitted certain societies in England to present addresses "filled with bold, insolent, and seditious expressions:" and that answers were returned to those addresses "*in a congenial spirit.*"† He goes so far as to admit that "many‡ violent patriotic members of the Convention aspired to the glory of *revolutionizing England*;"§ and that after the decisive victory of Gemappe "the licentious enthusiasm of that democratic and anarchic body‖ knew no bounds." Lastly, as he had acknowledged at the beginning of his pamlet,¶ that the "French government must

* P. 30. † P. 28.

‡ If Mr. B. had said "most of the members," instead of "many," he would have acknowledged the *whole* truth.

§ P. 27.

‖ So Mr. B. himself terms the French convention, P. 28.

¶ P. 3.

bear

bear its *ſhare* of blame" in regard to the origin of the war, ſo he has made, toward the cloſe of it,* the following remarkable declaration, which certainly implies ſomething more. "Had France uniformly acted "upon a ſyſtem of moderation and diſcre-"tion, it would indeed have been extremely "eaſy, as M. Dumouriez juſtly affirms, to "have avoided a war with England." Since then, as Mr. Dumouriez affirms, and Mr. Belſham admits, it would have been extremely eaſy for the French rulers to have avoided a war with England, had they uniformly acted upon a ſyſtem of moderation and diſcretion, it neceſſarily follows, that the *want* of moderation and diſcretion, on the part of the French rulers, was the *impediment* to the continuance of peace, and conſequently that it was their *indiſcretion and immoderation,* which gave birth to the preſent war.

It is extraordinary therefore, that Mr. Belſham ſhould labour ſo hard, to confute

* P. 87.

what

what I have faid, when it was the avowed object of my hiftory to eftablifh this very point. And it is ftill more extraordinary, that he fhould clofe his inquiry * by affert-ing, that the Britifh Minifters "ftand charged before God and their country, for *precipitating* the nation into a deftructive and ruinous conteft," not only, when he had given no proof of fo black a charge, but when he had granted, that the continu-ance of peace was prevented by the mad ambition of the French rulers. However, as Mr. Belfham has thought proper to be guilty of this inconfiftency, I think myfelf in duty bound to follow him through the whole of his pamphlet, left, if any ob-jection fhould be left unanfwered, his friends fhould fondly imagine that it were unan-fwerable.

His objections, as I have already obferved, relate, not to the *facts*, which I have al-ledged, but to the *ufe*, which I have made of thofe facts, and the *inferences*, which I have

* P. 115.

deduced

deduced from them. My two "fatiguing volumes," as Mr. Belſham calls them, (and not without reaſon, as they were undoubtedly fatiguing to *him*) are accuſed of containing, not only "harſh, forced, and perverſe conſtructions,"* but even "*innumerable* fallacies and miſrepreſentations."† In ſupport of this accuſation, which, it muſt be confeſſed, is a pretty extenſive one, Mr. Belſham has collected, from various parts of my hiſtory, ſuch examples, as, in his opinion, clearly demonſtrate, either a perverſeneſs of conſtruction, or a fallacy of reaſoning. Theſe examples therefore ſhall be very minutely examined, in the order of the chapters in my hiſtory, to which they relate. And, ſince my prudent adverſary has not only, (as we may reaſonably preſume,) ſelected ſuch examples, as were the moſt ſuitable to his purpoſe, but has himſelf declared, that he propoſed to examine my "*principal* arguments," and to neglect only what he calls *minutiæ*; ‡ ſince he has like-

* P. 82. † P. 83. ‡ P. 3.

wiſe

wiſe admitted, that, "if the *principal* points at iſſue are placed in a juſt and clear light, it will be eaſy to decide on the merit of *ſubordinate* conſiderations,"* he can have no objection to let the charge, which he has brought againſt me, depend on the validity of thoſe examples. But if the *majority* of thoſe examples, inſtead of militating againſt the accuſed, ſhould prove only ſtrange miſrepreſentations, on the part of the accuſer, he will have juſtly brought down the condemnation of the public on his *own* head.

As the orators of ancient Rome employed both confirmation and confutation in their public harangues, ſo Mr. Belſham, though he has not preſerved Ciceronian arrangement, has attempted to confirm his own opinions, as well as to confute the opinions of his adverſary. For this purpoſe, he has not produced, either new documents,† or

* P. 83.

† All the documents, which he has produced, were already contained in my work. He has indeed made ſome few additions: For inſtance, he has added, in one place, ſomething from a ſpeech of Briſſot,

new facts; but he has endeavoured to represent known facts ‡ in a different light from that, in which I had represented them. We must examine therefore, whether Mr. Belsham's light be not delusive; whether the colour of the objects, which he presents to the spectator, arises from the natural texture of their surface, or from the coloured rays, which the optician throws on them. And as the examples of objection to my statements will be canvassed in the order of the chapters, to which they relate, Mr. Belsham's new representations shall be canvassed in the same order. To this two-fold canvass we now proceed.

sot, in another place something from a speech of Kersaint, from which speeches I had already quoted the material parts. Nor has Mr. Belsham, as will appear in the sequel, at all benefited his own cause by the additional quotations.

‡ Though Mr. B. has taken all his facts from my work, yet, as it would be unjust to claim more than one's due, I acknowledge, that the *use*, which Mr. B. has made of them, is entirely *his own*.

CHAP.

CHAP. I.

Mr. Belſham has brought no charge againſt me, for any thing advanced in this chapter. Nor has he endeavoured to place in a new light, any fact, which is recorded there.

CHAP. II.

The ſame may be ſaid of this chapter.

CHAP. III.

The ſame may be ſaid of this chapter.

CHAP. IV.

In this chapter Mr. Belſham objects to *two* paſſages. The one relates to an opinion, which I had advanced; the other to an inference, which I had drawn.

He finds fault with me (p. 8.) for repreſenting it only as a matter of doubt, whether the treaty of Pavia were genuine, or not, when, according to Mr. B. it may "ſafely be pronounced ſpurious." Now I believe, as well as Mr. Belſham, that the treaty of Pavia, like the inſtructions aſcribed to M. Maret, was fabricated merely

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to ſerve the purpoſes of a party. I believed ſo, when I wrote the paſſage in queſtion, and quoted the authority of a very good judge, in ſupport of that opinion. But, as ſeveral oppoſition writers had ſtrenuouſly aſſerted, that the treaty was genuine, I thought proper to expreſs myſelf with caution on a ſubject, which I did not take upon me to inveſtigate: And, as I knew that I could vindicate the Britiſh government, with which alone I was concerned, from the charge of having acceded to the treaty, even *if* it were genuine, I choſe to combat my adverſaries on their own hypotheſis, in order to preclude every ſpecies of objection. Mr. Belſham's affectation, therefore, in taking part with the foreign powers, who were ſaid to have ſigned the treaty, and correcting my ſuppoſed doubts on the ſubject, is truly ridiculous.

The inference, to which Mr. Belſham objects, was deduced from the following facts: That though the Britiſh government, in February 1792, having views, as Mr. B. himſelf admits, unqueſtionably pacific, had

not

not only aboliſhed taxes, diminiſhed the land forces, and given up the treaty with Heſſe Caſſel, but had even reduced the number of ſeamen, in his Majeſty's pay, to *ſixteen* thouſand, it was propoſed, a few weeks afterwards, in the French national aſſembly, by the committee for naval affairs, to augment the number of ſeamen, in the pay of France, to *eighty* thouſand. Hence I deduced, at the end of chap. iv. the following inference: "It is true, that theſe "were only *preparatory* ſteps to an augmen-"tation of the French marine; but as they "were taken at a time, when England had "juſt made ſo conſiderable a diminution of "its own naval force, the conduct of the "National Aſſembly unavoidably *excited the* "*ſuſpicion of an hoſtile diſpoſition toward Eng-"land.*"

To obviate this concluſion, Mr. B. ſays (p. 9), that the Committee meant only to ſtate, that "*in caſe* of a naval war," eighty thouſand ſailors would be requiſite to man the French navy. But the Committee moſt earneſtly recommended the *immediate* execu-

tion

tion of this plan; of which Mr. B. could not have been ignorant, becauſe I quoted the following paſſage from their report—" It is " in the name of thoſe troops, whoſe courage always ſupported the honour of the French flag—that your Committee requeſt you, *not to defer* the organization of the naval artillery, and of the naval troops." It was certainly therefore not intended, that the propoſed augmentation ſhould take place, merely *in caſe* of an attack from Great Britain, becauſe at the time, when it was propoſed that the augmentation ſhould take place, there was not the moſt diſtant proſpect of any ſuch attack. Mr. Belſham's *caſe* therefore can denote only the caſe of an attack on the part of France. But, ſays Mr. Belſham, " it would have been a ſtrange time to have indulged their inclination for a naval war, with a land war in full proſpect, when, according to the report of M. de Molleville, the Marine Miniſter, quoted by Mr. Marſh himſelf ſome pages before, the French ſailors were almoſt univerſally in a ſtate of inſurrection," &c. Now

it

it is true that I quoted M. de Molleville, not ſome *pages*, but two *chapters* before, to prove that the French ſailors, in the *Autumn* of 1791, were in a ſtate of inſurrection. But does it follow therefore that they were in the ſame ſtate in the *Spring* of 1792? As well might Mr. B. have quoted a newſpaper, containing an account of the inſurrection at the Nore in May 1797, to prove that the ſailors of Lord Duncan's fleet were in a ſtate of inſurrection, in the following month of October. And as to the argument, that the probability of ſoon engaging in a war by land muſt have prevented all thoughts of engaging likewiſe in a war by ſea, though it might be applied to cautious ſtateſmen, who regulate their conduct by the rules of common prudence, yet it is wholly inapplicable to a ſet of enthuſiaſts, who declared that "vaſt ideas, grand deſigns, and an object ſublime and difficult, were neceſſary to form men and a great nation," who made no ſcruple to aſſert, that they were reſolved "to break with *all* the courts,"—"to ſet

all

all Europe at defiance,"—"to ſet the *four corners of Europe* on fire *."

After all, it is ſo obvious, that mere "*preparatory* ſteps †" toward ſo conſiderable an augmentation of the French marine, (whether the plan itſelf was fully executed or not, and whether the French rulers meant to avail themſelves of it, as ſoon as it was executed, or to wait till a more convenient opportunity offered) indicated a "hoſtile *diſpoſition* ‡" towards a Government, which, far from having afforded any motive for ſuch an augmentation, had juſt reduced its own naval eſtabliſhment to a *fifth* part of what was then propoſed in France, that we may juſtly wonder, how any man can think of cavilling about it.

* See the Hiſtory of the Politicks, Ch. vii. Notes 14, 15, 16, 34.

† Theſe are the very words, which I uſed in Ch. iv. though Mr. B. ſays (p. 9), that whoever judges from my repreſentation wou'd ſuppoſe that 80,000 ſailors were at this time *actually engaged* in the ſervice of France.

‡ Theſe were likewiſe the words which I uſed.

Nor would the caufe of my adverfary be at all promoted, if I were miftaken in this inftance: for, whatever doubts may be entertained of the hoftile difpofition of the French rulers in the *Spring* of 1792, that difpofition difplayed itfelf fo openly, and fo ftrongly, a few months afterwards, that Mr. B. himfelf is then forced to allow it *.

CHAP. V.

Mr. B. makes no direct objection to any thing, which I have faid in this chapter; but he has very artfully endeavoured to excite a fufpicion againft the Britifh Government, on the fubject of the Letter written by the King of France to the King of Great Britain on May 1, 1792. In this Letter the King of France, after thanking his Britannic Majefty for not taking part with Auftria againft France, fpeaks in *general terms* of the advantages, which would arife from a continuance of the friendfhip, which then fub-

* See the paffages quoted above from his pamphlet.

fifted

fifted between the two nations: but, as the Letter contained no *fpecific propofition*, or propofal of *terms* of alliance, it was unneceffary to make a particular reply. In fact, the only anfwer which was neceffary, and the only anfwer, which was returned, was that, which the Britifh Cabinet gave by its *conduct*, in continuing the friendfhip folicited by his Moft Chriftian Majefty. Yet Mr. Belfham talks, as if a fpecific anfwer had been given, though no one ever heard of it, and ventures to fay (p. 12.), "The fpecific anfwer to this truly noble and generous overture is not known: it appears only from the event, that it was rejected."—— On the contrary, it appears, from the *event*, that the friendfhip, fubfifting between the Courts of Great Britain and France, was fo far from being difturbed by any act on the part of the former, that a royal proclamation was iffued about three weeks afterwards, prohibiting all Britifh fubjects from entering into the fervice of any State at war with France. And it is equally manifeft, that, if the Britifh Cabinet had given any

 anfwer,

anſwer, which was unfriendly to France, M. Chauvelin would not have been ordered, ſix weeks afterwards, by the French Government, to thank his Britannic Majeſty for his "*friendly diſpoſitions, his ſentiments of humanity, of juſtice, and of peace* *."—When Mr. Belſham therefore talks of the incalculable miſchiefs, which might have been avoided, if the anſwer of the Britiſh Cabinet, an anſwer, which exiſts only in his own imagination, had not been unfriendly, and when he adds ſentimentally, that "the idea is too painful to dwell upon †," it is all empty declamation, or rather it is worſe than empty declamation, inaſmuch as its tendency is miſchievous.

CHAP. VI.

Mr. Belſham finds no fault with any thing in this chapter.

* See M. Chauvelin's Note, dated June 18, 1792. Hiſtory of the Politicks, &c. Ch. v. Note 9.

† P. 12.

CHAP. VII.

Though Mr. B. ſtill declares himſelf of opinion, that the Britiſh Government ought to have come forward, at the end of June 1792, as mediator between France and Auſtria; yet, as he has not attempted to confute any one argument, by which I had proved, that the Britiſh Government would have acted very injudiciouſly in ſo doing, there is nothing in this chapter, which I am called upon to defend.

Beſides, it was clearly proved, in this chapter, that the mediation, which was requeſted in the name of the King of France, when his authority was expiring, was ſo far from being ſeriouſly deſired by the majority of the National Aſſembly, in whoſe hands the whole power of France was then veſted, that they were determined at all events to proſecute the war, which they had declared againſt Auſtria. And to the detailed proof of this poſition, which occupies more than three fourths of the ſeventh chap-

ter, or twenty-nine pages of the ſecond edition, Mr. Belſham has not been able to produce a ſingle objection. In fact he has paſſed over the whole of that important portion in total ſilence; as he well knew, that, if the French rulers were reſolved, *not* to have peace, his readers muſt think it very abſurd, to cenſure the Britiſh Government, for not endeavouring to procure it for them.

Farther Mr. B. ſays, p. 16, that if Auſtria and Pruſſia had "ſhewn themſelves wholly obſtinate and refractory, England had in recent inſtances manifeſted *in what mode* reſpect to her mediation could be enforced." Now the mode, of which Mr. B. here ſpeaks, muſt denote a junction with France, againſt Auſtria and Pruſſia, which many other gentlemen of his party have repreſented as the beſt policy which could have been adopted. Yet Mr. Belſham himſelf (p. 106) calls the French revolution a "political volcano," and a "flaming mountain," from which, he ſays, it was the duty of the Britiſh miniſters to ſtand at a *ſafe diſtance*. According to Mr. Belſham's own principles

then,

then, a junction with France, in June 1792, would have been downright madneſs: for, inſtead of keeping at a ſafe diſtance from the burning mountain, we ſhould then have plunged into its very crater.

CHAPTER VIII.

On this Chapter Mr. B. makes no obſervation.

CHAPTER IX.

The arguments, which I had uſed in this chapter, to vindicate the Britiſh government in recalling Lord Gower, after the depoſition of the King of France, are left wholly unanſwered by Mr. Belſham. But he has taken conſiderable pains to repreſent the conduct of the Britiſh and French governments, on this occaſion, in a different point of view from that in which I had repreſented them.

In the firſt place he aſſerts (p. 18) that "Louis XVI. was unqueſtionably *a traitor to the conſtitution, which he had ſworn to de-*

 fend,"

fend." Now it was in September 1791, that Louis XVI. accepted the new conſtitution: and from this time to the time of his depoſition he had done no one act, which warranted the National Aſſembly (according to the conſtitution, which *they* likewiſe had ſworn to defend) to take ſo ſevere a meaſure. If Mr. Belſham will take the trouble to examine Ch. II. Sect. I. Art. 4, 5, 6, of the conſtitution of 1791, he will find three caſes particularly ſpecified, in which, and in which *alone*, this conſtitution declared the throne vacant: firſt, if the King refuſed to take the oath; ſecondly, if he placed himſelf at the head of a foreign army, deſtined to act againſt France; thirdly, if he quitted the kingdom. But Louis XVI. had been guilty of none of theſe offences. That he had taken the oath, Mr. B. himſelf admits; and every one knows, that he neither put himſelf at the head of a foreign army, nor that he quitted the kingdom. He did not even *attempt* to quit the kingdom, after he had accepted the conſtitution; and ſophiſtry itſelf will hardly venture to quote the at-

tempt,

tempt, which he made, *before* he accepted the conſtitution, unleſs it can be proved, that a man is bound by a contract before he has made it. Not Louis XVI. therefore, but the members of the National Aſſembly were traitors to the conſtitution, which they had ſworn to defend.

Further, Mr. Belſham, taking for granted, that the recall of Lord Gower was a direct interference in the internal affairs of France, quotes a paſſage* from my Hiſtory, in which I had repreſented even the old government of France as having acted inſincerely toward England, and then aſks with great triumph (p. 19) " If all this be true, " why incur any political riſques in oppoſ- " ing the downfall of a government, which " had ſhewn itſelf thus uniformly treache- " rous and hoſtile?"—To this I anſwer, with great ſubmiſſion, that we did *not* oppoſe the downfall of the old French government: we remained perfectly neutral, as the

* This paſſage, however, as is Mr. Belſham's method, is quoted very imperfectly. But on Mr. B's method of quoting, more will be ſaid hereafter.

National

National Convention itſelf teſtified* ſo late as Jan. 13, 1793: nor did we interfere, as Spain did, in behalf of Louis XVI., even when that unfortunate monarch was brought, as a criminal, to the bar of the National Convention. Surely it was enough to be ſilent on that melancholy occaſion: it would have have been too much, to expect us to applaud.

"The National Aſſembly (continues Mr. B.) had taken every opportunity of courting the favour and friendſhip of the Britiſh nation."—That they courted or pretended to court the Britiſh *nation,* while they took every opportunity of inſulting the Britiſh *government,* is certainly true. We need only recollect the anſwers of the National Convention to the certain Britiſh ſocieties,† and the circular letter of Monge, in which the French miniſter promiſes, that they will ſpeedily fly into the arms of their brother

* See the Hiſtory of the Politicks, &c. Ch. IV., Note 13.

† Ib. Ch. X. Notes 19, 20, 21.

republicans in England, and inftantly deftroy the Englifh government.* Their motive likewife, for courting the favour of the Englifh *nation*, is well known: indeed Briffot himfelf avowed it, when he faid, "it was neceffary to excite the governed to rebel againft their governors."†

Mr. Belfham however pretends (p. 20.) that the recall of Lord Gower was "a "mighty fhock to the feelings of that high-"fpirited and gallant people, who carry to "a pitch, which borders on the *romantic*, "*their ideas of the point of honour.*" Now it is certain that men, who made no fcruple to declare, that it was their intention to excite infurrections in every country, and who were not afhamed, repeatedly to affert what they knew to be falfe,‡ muft have had very *romantic* ideas indeed of the point of *honour*.

* Ib. Ch. XII. Note 42.

† See more on this fubject in Ch. II. Note 9, where it is fhewn, that the fyftem of exciting the governed to rebel againft their governors, was adopted in a very early ftage of the French revolution.

‡ See the examples quoted in Ch. XIII. Notes 41, 42, 83, 106, 108.

As it is a favourite position of Mr. Belsham, that the recall of Lord Gower was an interference in the internal affairs of France, he quotes a passage (p. 21) from a speech of Brissot, in which this celebrated sophist declares, that it was. But it will certainly be allowed, that Le Brun, who was at that time the French minister for foreign affairs, is at least as good authority on this subject, as Brissot: and Le Brun signified to Lord Gower himself, that he did *not* consider the behaviour of the British cabinet on that occasion, as an interference in the affairs of France.* He said likewise, in his Report to the National Assembly, a few days after Lord Gower quitted Paris, that the British

* Le Brun in his Note to Lord Gower, (just before his Lordship quitted Paris) speaking of the assurances of neutrality, with which the recall of the British ambassador was accompanied, said, " This assurance appears to be the result of the attention, wisely reflected on, and solemnly expressed by his Britannic Majesty, *not* to interfere in the interior arrangement of the affairs of France." See the original quoted in the Hist. of the Politicks, &c. Ch. IX. Note 2.

ambaſſador "had left a *ſatisfactory teſtimony of the ſentiments of his court.*"* Le Brun declared further, in his Letter to Lord Gower, not only that the French nation confided "in the juſtice, the moderation, and the impartiality of the Britiſh cabinet," but likewiſe that "this confidence was *founded on facts.*"† Yet Mr. Belſham, in defiance of Le Brun, has ventured (p. 25) to accuſe the Britiſh cabinet "of an hollow neutrality of *words*, contradicted by her own public *act.*" If Mr. B. objects to the teſtimony of Le Brun, yet he will hardly deny a well authenticated fact, that the Britiſh cabinet, about the time of Lord Gower's recall, again was ſolicited to join the coalition, and again refuſed.‡ Its aſſurances of neutrality therefore were confirmed, not contradicted, by its actions.

But, if the Britiſh government intended to remain neutral, why (exclaims Mr. Belſham, p. 23) did Lord Gower depart at all?

* Ch. IX. Note 12. † Ib. Note 11

‡ Ib. Note 13.

The

The anſwer to this queſtion he will find at full length in Chap. IX. of my Hiſtory; and therefore it is unneceſſary to reply to it again. But "Baron Blohm, the Daniſh "ambaſſador at Paris in Auguſt 1792 (ſays "Mr. B. p. 107) did not immediately retire "from the French territory in conſequence "of the events of that month." True; he did not retire *immediately*, and I told Mr. Belſham ſo in Ch. IX. I told him likewiſe the reaſon, namely, that Baron Blohm was too ill at that time to leave Paris immediately: for he actually received letters of recall from the Court of Denmark, as I related very diſtinctly, though Mr. Belſham has thought proper to ſuppreſs this material circumſtance, and thus to let his readers imagine, that the Daniſh ambaſſador was *not* recalled.

Laſtly, Mr. Belſham (p. 22) repreſents as highly meritorious the conduct of the new French government, in permitting Mr. Chauvelin to remain in London, after Lord Gower was recalled from Paris.—But Mr. Chauvelin actually *was* recalled: his letters of

of recall were brought over to him by Mr. Noel, afterwards ambaſſador at the Hague: and Mr. Chauvelin procured a revocation of the order by uſing the following argument: "That though he was not well with the "Engliſh Miniſter, yet he was perfectly ſo "with Mr. Fox and ſome other members of "oppoſition, and that it would not be pru-"dent in France, *to loſe the fruits of his la-"bours with theſe gentlemen and their ſubſe-"quent ſervices*, for a vain form of diplo-"matic etiquette." Of this fact, which is very well authenticated, Mr. B. could not have been ignorant, becauſe I have quoted it twice in the courſe of my Hiſtory:* and therefore, if he had been wiſe, he would have ſaid nothing about the *merit* of the French government on this occaſion.

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Belſham has made only *one* formal objection to any thing which I have advanced

* Ch. XIII, Note 34, and again at the end of Ch. XVI.

in

in this chapter, though it is replete with facts and documents, which very clearly demonstrate, that the French were the aggressors in the present war. But he has made two observations, which relate to the same period with this chapter, and which require a little correction. These shall be considered first.

After having admitted (p. 26) that the leading orators of the Convention intimated and even asserted, "that, in case of a war, "it would be easy to excite a formidable in-"surrection in England, which would pro-"bably terminate in the subversion of kingly "government," he adds, "How far Mr. "Brissot and other popular orators in the "Convention who used this language, *cre-"dited* these extravagancies themselves *does "not appear.*" But if Mr. Belsham will take the trouble to read Ch. X. once more, and to read it with attention, he will find, that the matter appears very clearly. However, not to give him too much trouble, I will here repeat *one* of the reasons for believing that Le Brun, Brissot, and many other leading

leading men in France, really *did* give credit to ſuch extravagancies. Mr. Miles, namely, who was well acquainted with the views of the leading men at that time in France, has repeatedly aſſerted what Mr. B. affects to doubt, and in one place has made the following ſolemn declaration on this very ſubject. "*Such, I aver on the faith of an honeſt man,* "*were the deluſive hopes entertained by Le* "*Brun and many others, who, unfortunately* "*for both nations, had more power and influ-*"*ence at that moment, than ſenſe and diſcre-*"*cretion.*"* The whole conduct of the French rulers toward England confirmed this declaration.

But, ſays Mr. Belſham (p. 26), "there "exiſts no evidence of their entertaining any "agents in England, with a view to excite "public diſturbances." I beg leave therefore to recommend it to Mr. Belſham, once more to read ch. x. of my hiſtory, where he will find very ſatisfactory evidence

* This declaration I quoted toward the cloſe of chap. x. from the Authentic Correſpondence, p. 88.

on this ſubject. Not to tire the reader's patience with too many repetitions of what has been already related in that work, I will quote at preſent only the following paſſage from Mr. Miles's Letter to Le Brun, dated Jan. 2, 1793. "*Recall then all your emiſſa-*" *ries: put an end to the propaganda: and*" *no longer ſtrive to diſturb the public tran-*" *quillity in this country.*"* Surely Mr. Miles would not have written in this manner to Le Brun, who was both French Miniſter for foreign affairs, and his intimate friend, unleſs French emiſſaries had been actually ſent by the French government, to excite diſturbances in England. But if Mr. Belſham is not ſatisfied with the teſtimony of Mr. Miles, he will certainly not reject the evidence of Briſſot, who made no ſcruple of admitting that French emiſſaries actually were employed, and even that they were furniſhed with immenſe ſums for the purpoſe in queſtion.†

* See more of this letter, which is quoted in ch. x. note 43, in the original French.

† See the paſſages quoted from Briſſot in ch. x. notes 38--42.

I come

I come now to Mr. Belſham's objection, which I have deferred for no other reaſon, than becauſe he has made it a little further on in his pamphlet, where the ſubject does not immediately relate to ch. x.—In this chapter, after having proved, by authentic documents, the *fact*, that the French government was concerned in a plot to overthrow the Britiſh government in December, 1792, I quoted ſeveral remarkable *circumſtances* of this plot from a French work,* the author of which appeared to be well acquainted with the ſubject. But, as I did not know who the author was, and therefore could not be certain that he was perfectly accurate, though many of the circumſtances which he has related, were confidently reported in London at the very time, I told my readers very fairly, that I did not require implicit credit to be given to thoſe *circumſtances*, and ſaid expreſsly in note 36, that "I did not quote them as *abſolutely certain*,

* It is printed in the Collection des Meilleurs Ouvrages, qui ont été publiés pour la défenſe de Louis xvi. Paris, 1793, 2 tom. 8vo.

"because they were not taken from an *official* "document." Nor did I ever make use of them in the subsequent part of the history, as it was my invariable rule to draw no conclusions, except from facts, of which I gave unanswerable proof. I acted precisely in the same manner in regard to a quotation from the Moniteur in ch. xi. note 6.: and, as I was there likewise unacqainted with the author, I applied the same caution, and, though the quotation contained strong internal marks of credibility, I again said, "as it is not an *official* document, I shall make no further use of it." These are the only two instances of anonymous quotations, or of quotations which I could not warrant, throughout my whole work; and, as I in both cases distinguished them from authentic documents, as I cautioned the reader in regard to his own use of them, and made no use of them myself in any conclusions which I drew, my conduct on those occasions deserved rather commendation, than censure.

Under these circumstances, no adversary, who possessed the least candour, would have selected

ſelected one of thoſe examples as a ſubject of animadverſion: and ſtill leſs would he have ſuppreſſed the declaration, which I made on each occaſion. But Mr. Belſham has choſen to be guilty of both offences: for in p. 29. he ſays very ſneeringly, and apparently with great triumph, "Thoſe perſons "who are curious to know the *authentic* par-"ticulars of this incomprehenſible plot, "muſt apply to very high authority indeed. "The King of England, ſays Mr. Marſh, "quoting from *the nameleſs author of a name-"leſs tract*," &c. He then produces the quotation, which he cloſes with another ſneer: but he takes no notice whatſoever of the declaration, which I had made in reſpect to its *not* being an authentic document. Thus he has repreſented the matter in a totally falſe light: and as he has likewiſe paſſed over in ſilence all the official documents, which I have quoted in the ſame chapter, he has given his readers to underſtand, not only, that I aſcribed authenticity to a document, which I had openly diſavowed, but that this document was the *only one*, which

I had been able to produce.—An advocate who feels himſelf reduced to the neceſſity of taking ſuch deſperate meaſures as theſe, muſt be conſcious to himſelf, that he is defending a deſperate cauſe

Before I conclude the preſent ſubject, I will take the liberty of giving Mr. Belſham one piece of advice. Though he has endeavoured to ridicule my conduct, he will do well to follow it, and to let his readers know what is authentic, and what is *not* authentic, in *his own* works.

CHAPTER XI.

Mr. Belſham has made no formal objection to any thing, which I have ſaid in this chapter. But he has made two aſſertions relative to the ſubject of it, which require a few words in anſwer.

He ſays, p. 29, that the extravagancies of the National Convention would never have been committed, if Lord Gower had remained in Paris. Now this is an aſſertion, which it is impoſſible to prove, and which no man, who has accurately ſtudied the

principles

principles and ſprings of action of that turbulent aſſembly will ever believe.

But when he aſſerts (p. 31) that the alien bill, and the other bills, which were introduced at the end of December, 1792, "*were paſſed in direct and acknowledged defiance of the commercial treaty,*" he repeats a propoſition which I had already proved to be abſurd. In chap. xi. note 32. I quoted the *French* alien bill, which paſſed May 18, 1792, ſix months *before* the Engliſh alien bill was even propoſed: and hence I very juſtly concluded, that as the French themſelves had already violated the treaty of commerce by their *own* alien bill, which was full as ſtrong as the Britiſh alien bill, the treaty had ceaſed, at leaſt in *this* reſpect, to be binding on Great Britain, and conſequently that, when they complained of the Britiſh alien bill, as a violation of the treaty of commerce, they were guilty of a manifeſt abſurdity.

If Mr. Belſham was ignorant of all this, he ſhould have ſtudied my hiſtory a little more before he ventured to write remarks

 on

on it: and if he was not ignorant of what has been juſt mentioned, he ſhould not have ventured to repeat the abſurd propoſition. But he has neglected this rule throughout the whole of his pamphlet; for he is continually making aſſertions, which had been already confuted in my Hiſtory. For this reaſon it ſeems almoſt unneceſſary to go on replying to each ſingle objection: indeed it *is* ſo, if regard be had only to the readers of that hiſtory. But, as I cannot flatter myſelf, that the generality of Mr. Belſham's readers have devoted much attention to a work, which their favorite hiſtorian ſays is ſo very "*fatiguing*," I am compelled to proceed on *their* account, whoſe eſteem is not an object of indifference to *me*, though Mr. Belſham has declared* that *my* eſteem is a matter of perfect indifference to *him*.

CHAP. XII.

This chapter, which is a very important one, and is replete with facts and docu-

* Page 3.

ments, which prove that the French rulers were reſolved at all events on a war with England, muſt have been conſidered by Mr. Belſham, as one of the *minutiæ*, of which he ſpeaks at the beginning of his pamphlet: For he has made *no* direct objection to any thing which I have ſaid in it. He has made indeed a few efforts to palliate the conduct of the French rulers; but thoſe efforts are ſo awkward, that, if his clients were now alive, they would hardly thank their advocate for his trouble.

His attention is firſt directed to the infamous decree of Dec. 15, 1792, which was a declaration of war, not only on all exiſting *governments*, but on all *nations* which refuſed to rebel againſt thoſe governments. This decree Mr. Belſham repreſents as a conſequence of the meaſures taken about this time by the Britiſh Parliament. For after having noticed (p. 29) the meeting of Parliament on Dec. 13, the ſpeech from the throne (p. 30) and the meaſures taken by Parliament (p. 31) namely, the reſolutions for an augmentation of the naval and mili-

tary force, the paſſing of the alien bill, and the bill for preventing the circulation of aſſignats, and the exportation of arms and corn to France, " by great and deciſive majorities in both houſes," Mr. Belſham adds, *immediately* after the words juſt quoted, " *Theſe meaſures* were not of a nature to " paſs unnoticed in the National Conven- " tion of France. On the 15th December, " the principles of Jacobiniſm ſtill rapidly " gaining ground in that aſſembly, a de- " cree paſſed," &c. Now the curioſity is, that *theſe meaſures*, which according to Mr. Belſham produced their effect in the National Convention on Dec. 15, took place, one and all of them, *after* that day. The alien bill, which was the firſt of thoſe four bills, was not even propoſed before Dec. 19, and it did not get through both houſes before Jan. 4, 1793. All this Mr. Belſham might have known, if he had read chap. xi. of my hiſtory a little more attentively. But, in fact, there was no neceſſity for inquiring into the particular days, on which thoſe bills were carried " by great and deciſive majorities

majorities in both houſes," becauſe, as the Parliament did not meet till Dec. 13, every one who is acquainted with the uſual buſi-neſs at the commencement of a ſeſſion, muſt know, that no bill could be brought in before Dec. 15; and even then we muſt allow two days at leaſt, for a courier to carry the intelli-gence to Paris. Further, as the decree, which paſſed in the Convention on Dec. 15, muſt have been drawn up, at the lateſt, on the preceding evening, it is impoſſible that even the debates on the addreſs ſhould have been known at that time in Paris. Laſtly, what renders Mr. Belſham's blunder ſtill more ex-traordinary is, that he himſelf, only two pages before, had expreſsly mentioned the day on which the Parliament met.

As ſerious argumentation therefore does not appear to anſwer Mr. Belſham's purpoſe, he has recourſe a few lines afterwards to wit; and ſays jocoſely, that in the decree of Dec. 15, " a ſtrong and facile imagination, " like that of Mr. Marſh, might ſuppoſe an " oblique threat to England included."— Now this decree was a confirmation, and an

extenſion

extenſion of the decree of November 19; and the National Convention, on Dec. 24, 1792, virtually declared that it *was* their intention to apply the decree of Nov. 19, to Great Britain. For when M. Baraillon propoſed on that day, to limit the decree to the nations with which France was actually at war, and made his motion expreſsly on the ground, that the decree gave offence to the Britiſh government, the propoſal was rejected even without a debate.* It appears then, that a man muſt have a very *facile* imagination, if he can work it up to a belief, that a threat to England was *not* intended, and even ſomething more than an *oblique* one.

This *facile* imagination leads Mr. Belſham, a few lines afterwards, (p. 32,) to adopt an hypothetical mode of reaſoning,

* Chap. xii. note 36, Mr. Belſham, in order to palliate the conduct of the National Convention on this occaſion, ſays (p. 32) that the propoſition of M. Baraillon was rejected, as being "*inſidiouſly* deſigned;" but he has not told us, in what this imagined inſidiouſneſs conſiſted.

and

and to ſay, in juſtification of the French rulers, that "if England joined the coalition of deſpots, they meant, no doubt, to claſs her, as ſhe claſſed herſelf." But the fact is, the French rulers claſſed England, as ſhe did *not* claſs herſelf: for on Nov. 28, 1792, they applied the decree of Nov. 19, to England, though by their own acknowledgement, the Engliſh government, at that time, had not departed from the ſtricteſt neutrality.*

"The conduct of the executive government was however (ſays Mr. B. p. 33) far more temperate than that of the legiſlative, and indeed highly laudable, conſidering their circumſtances," &c. To enable the reader to judge of the accuracy of this aſſertion, he need only have recourſe to the commentary, with which the *temperate* and *laudable* Executive Council † accompanied the decree of Dec. 15; or to the cir-

* Chap. iv. note 13.

† It then conſiſted of Le Brun, Monge, Garat, Pache, Claviere, and Roland.

cular

cular letter of Monge; or to Le Brun's order for an appeal to the English nation; and the reader will discover, in all these, at least as much violence as in any of the decrees of the National Convention. Mr. B. therefore should not have added, "considering these "circumstances, and the absolute necessity "the members of the council were under "of conforming in a certain degree to the "humours and caprices of a disorderly de-"mocratic assembly;" for, so far were the members of the council from conforming *in a certain degree*, that they went at least equal, and in some cases still greater lengths, than the Convention itself.

In addition to the examples just mentioned, it will be necessary to take particular notice of the following: because Mr. Belsham has taken great pains in the distortion of it. On January 10, 1793, while the negotiation with Great Britain was pending, the Executive Council sent to general Miranda, who, in the absence of Dumouriez, commanded in the Netherlands, an order to put his troops immediately in motion,

tion, and to invade the Dutch territory. This order was remarkable, on various accounts: In the first place, the Executive Council had only thirteen days before, namely, in the note presented on Dec. 27, by M. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, given the most solemn promise, "*not to attack Holland, while that power confined itself, on its part, within the bounds of strict neutrality*:" And Brissot himself acknowledged in the National Convention, two days *after* the order for the invasion of Holland had been signed, that the Dutch government had, even till then, preserved the most strict neutrality.* Here then we have *one* infamous violation of a solemn promise, on the part of the *laudable* Executive Council. Further, this same Council, in the note signed by Le Brun on January 7, had again alluded to its declaration respecting Holland; had again expressed its *sincere desire to maintain peace and harmony between France and England*; had again professed *to renounce all conquest*. Yet only three days after the repetition of these assurances, before

* See ch. xiii. note 42.

the

the British government could give any answer, and indeed before the note of Jan. 7, had been delivered to Lord Grenville, dared to order the immediate invasion of a country allied to England by the most solemn treaties. Surely we cannot have a stronger instance of perfidy and hypocrisy; nor can we have a stronger proof that the Executive Council had determined to commence hostilities, without any regard to the result of the negotiation. Indeed Dumouriez has made no scruple to acknowledge it; for he has positively declared, that Le Brun desired him, "*to pay no regard to the negotiations with England and Holland.*"*

In order to remove all doubts on this subject, I quoted at full length, in chap. xii. the order of the Executive Council;† from which it appears, not only that the order was absolute, but that Miranda was commanded to put it in execution *as soon as possible*. One of the expressions communicated

* See chap. xiv. note 4.

† In the notes 51, 52, I quoted it also in the original French.

to

to Miranda was, "*There is no time to loſe.*" And another, "*The whole depends on promptitude and ſecrecy.*" Further, Miranda was ſpecially directed to reach with his army the province of Zealand *within twelve days at furtheſt*: And the reaſon of this haſte was expreſsly aſſigned, namely, that it was intended to take the Dutch by ſurpriſe, before they had time to ſend troops to the iſland of Walcheren, and to fortify it. All theſe inſtructions Miranda himſelf afterwards publiſhed; and as I produced them all in chap. xii. in Engliſh, as well as in French, it was impoſſible that Mr. Belſham ſhould have remained ignorant of them.

Yet this gentleman has ventured, not indeed where he profeſſedly treats of ch. xii. but in another part of his pamphlet,* to term the order ſent to Miranda "a *proviſional* order:" and to convert the twelve

* P. 77—79, more than forty pages beyond the place, where he treats of ch. xii. His reaſon for removing the conſideration of this ſubject to ſuch a diſtance from the place, to which it properly belongs, I am unable to aſſign.

days,

days, which Miranda was commanded *not to exceed*, into twelve days, which Miranda was ordered *to wait*. Nor does Mr. Belſham ſcruple to aſſert, that the French government allowed the twelve days "*for the expreſs purpoſe of receiving an anſwer*" from England. And in order to impreſs this idea more ſtrongly on the minds of his readers he ſays, p. 78, "*that interval of time being no doubt deemed ſufficient for the reception of the ultimatum of England.*"—Here Mr. Belſham has outdone himſelf; and I confeſs that, though the long habit of hearing the groſſeſt falſehoods during an eight years war, has enabled me to bear them with almoſt a ſtoical apathy, I found it difficult to ſuppreſs my feelings, when I firſt obſerved this ſhameful diſtortion, this daring defiance of documents, of which the writer could not have been ignorant. Indignation however ſoon yielded to another emotion, when I perceived that Mr. Belſham himſelf, immediately before the words "that interval of time, &c." had literally copied the expreſſion uſed in the order ſent to Miranda

"twelve

" twelve days *at fartheſt.*" For by preſerving this expreſſion entire, he has let every thinking reader diſcover, without any other aid, that Miranda was limited, not in regard to how *ſoon*, but in regard to how *late*, the attack on Holland was to commence: and conſequently in his attempt to perſuade the public, that Miranda was ordered to *wait* twelve days, he has ſhewn as great a want of dexterity, as of ſomething elſe.

But in another effort, which he has made to vindicate this order of the Executive Council, he has diſplayed ſome little dexterity, though little or no logic. It conſiſts in an argumentum ad hominem, which Mr. B. has introduced apparently with great triumph. In ch. xii. where I gave a full account of the order in queſtion, I ſaid, " France by declaring itſelf in a ſtate of war " with Holland virtually declared itſelf in a " ſtate of war with England. The common " intereſt, and the mutual obligations, " which then united theſe two countries, " made them really *one* nation, in regard to " an invaſion on the part of France; and an

"attack on Holland in Jan. 1793, was as "much an attack on Great Britain, as a decla- "ration of war against Holland in the present "year would be a declaration of hostilities "against France." This passage Mr. Belsham has endeavoured to convert against me: for he expresses his surprise (p. 78) that I should blame the order given by the Executive Council on Jan. 10, 1793, when I myself, as Mr. B. declares, have offered "*the best defence of this measure*" by stating that "the mutual obligations, which then united the two countries made them really *one* nation." And he is so pleased with this argumentum ad hominem, that he has repeated it p. 99, where he says, "the *only* "ground, on which the subsequent invasion "of Holland could be *plausibly* vindicated,*

* As Mr. B. says here "the *only* ground," he must either have forgotten or abandoned, when he came to p. 99, the argument of the *twelve days*, which he had applied twenty pages before. And even his argumentum ad hominen must by that time have lost a part of its value, in the estimation of the author, as he himself claims no other title for it than that of a *plausible* vindication.

"was

"was that the reciprocal engagements be-"tween that country and Great Britain "were so close, and intimate, that, as Mr. "Marsh himself acknowledges, the two "nations, in a political view, could only be "considered as *one*."

Now, though this circumstance would have justified England in *defending* Holland, when the latter was *attacked* by France, yet before it can be applied in vindication of the order given on January 10 for the *invasion* of Holland, it must be shewn, that the Executive Council would have acted in a justifiable manner, if they had signed an order on that very day, for the invasion of England. For unless this be true, it is manifest, that the connexion of Holland with England could afford no pretence whatever for an attack on Holland.* But Mr. Belsham

* The major proposition of the syllogism will in that case totally fail. Mr. B's. argument, when stated logically, will run thus:

It would have been justifiable in the Executive Council to have signed an order for the invasion of England on Jan. 10, 1793.

 himself

himſelf would find it difficult to find a plauſible argument, in favour of the opinion, that the Executive Council, after having declared in the Note of Jan. 7, its *ſincere deſire* to maintain peace with England, would have acted even with common decency, if they had declared war againſt England, only three days afterwards, before an anſwer to their Note either had been, or could have been received. And even *if* the French Government had had the moſt juſt cauſe for attacking England on Jan. 10, 1793, yet the defenſive (not offenſive) treaty between England and Holland, though it rendered them one nation, as far as related to mutual ſuccour, if either party was attacked by a third, yet it did not render them *one* nation in ſuch a ſenſe, that any cauſe of complaint againſt the one warranted an attack on the other, eſpecially when the moſt ſolemn pro-

But England and Holland, made at that time, in a political view, only *one* nation.

"Therefore the order, ſigned by the Executive Council on Jan. 10, 1793, for the invaſion of Holland, was juſtifiable.

miſe

miſ had been given, *not* to attack that other power, as long as that other power remained neutral, which it did, by the acknowledgement of the French themſelves. In ſhort Mr. Belſham's argument about the "*one* nation" is nothing more than a ſilly quibble.

But what excited my ſurpriſe infinitely more than this quibble, was to find Mr. Belſham turning all at once the accuſer of the Executive Council, and that too in a ſentence, which every one would take for a continuation of the arguments in its defence. "It may be farther allowed (continues Mr. B. p. 78) that this ſecret order "was in fact worſe than an open declaration; for as he (Mr. Marſh) gravely remarks, an open declaration gives the attacked power at leaſt a ſhort notice of the "intended hoſtilities; which was probably "the reaſon, why the Executive Council "preferred the former." Here then Mr. B. admits that the ſecret order ſigned by the Executive Council was *worſe*, than an open declaration would have been, becauſe the latter would have given the attacked power at

at least a short notice of the intended hostilities: and he is of opinion that the Executive Council preferred the former, that is, the *secret* order, for that very reason, namely, that the Dutch might be taken by surprise. Surely Mr. B. was not aware of what he was doing, when he inserted this sentence in his defence of the Executive Council. In fact, there is a sort of confusion in the passage, which made me at first take it for nonsense: and that confusion, as it must have previously existed in the mind of the writer, was probably the very impediment, which prevented him from perceiving the tendency of his own operations.

I fear that the reader is as tired, as myself, of this order of the Executive Council: but as Mr. B. has not yet done with it, and I am in duty bound to follow him step by step, I cannot immediately desist. However, there are only two more trifles to notice, and then we shall have done with the present chapter.

Mr. Belsham, in a tone of irony, which is useful enough where solid arguments are wanting, expresses his surprise, that the

"*perfidious Council*" did not commence hoſtilities ſix weeks ſooner, eſpecially as I ſaid in another place, that the naval armament of France commenced three months before that of England: and he adds triumphantly that I have not thought proper to aſſign the reaſon of this delay. But if Mr. B. will read my Hiſtory a little more attentively, he will find the reaſon aſſigned, in more places than one: he will find that it was the object of the Executive Council, to wait only, *till the plan of attack was ripe for execution.*

There remains only to notice a curious gloſs, which Mr. B. has put upon the following paſſage of the twelfth chapter. "Under theſe circumſtances it would have "been perfectly juſtifiable to have declared "war againſt France in the middle of Janu-"ary 1793." Theſe circumſtances, which I had expreſsly aſſigned, were; firſt, the order ſigned on January 10, for the invaſion of Holland: and ſecondly, ſeveral other circumſtances, all of which tended to prove, that the French government was reſolved at all events to involve England, as well as Holland,

Holland, in a war with France. But Mr. B. has thought proper, after quoting (p. 79) the paſſage in queſtion, to aſſure his readers that "theſe circumſtances" were the following: namely, "the Britiſh Government "had the faireſt poſſible opening for terminating all diſputes between the two countries, and even between France and the "other continental powers, by an amicable "and equitable accommodation, and the "French Government had allowed twelve "days for the expreſs purpoſe of receiving an "anſwer."——Now, if we ſay nothing of Mr. Belſham's attempt to miſrepreſent the circumſtances, on which my obſervation was founded, we muſt at leaſt think it extraordinary, that, after the order for the commencement of hoſtilities had been actually ſigned, there ſhould have been *the faireſt poſſible opening for terminating all diſputes.* And as to the *twelve days*, that point has been already ſettled.

CHAP.

CHAPTER XIII.

Though this chapter is a very long one, and contains, not only a full ſtatement of all the diplomatic communications, which took place between Great Britain and France before the commencement of hoſtilities, but likewiſe a long ſeries of remarks, in which I compared the *actions* of the French rulers with their *profeſſions*, Mr. Belſham has made only *two* direct attacks on any thing which I have ſaid in it. However, notwithſtanding his inability to confute my aſſertions, he has adopted a very ingenious method, from which he probably expected very great ſucceſs. As the Notes, which paſſed on this occaſion between the Britiſh and French governments were accompanied in my Hiſtory with a continued commentary, and this commentary contained a number of ſtubborn facts, which were very inimical to the cauſe of my adverſaries, Mr. Belſham has deemed it expedient to ſubſtitute after each of

of the diplomatic Notes,* a commentary of his own; and he probably hopes to superſede the former commentary, in the ſame manner, as Fabre d'Eglantine, the great reformer of the French calendar, got quit of the ſaints by ſubſtituting peaſe and onions. The whole of this new commentary therefore, which conſiſts of pure argument, ſhall be minutely examined, as ſoon as I have repelled the two attacks above mentioned; which indeed are not very formidable, as

* As Mr. B. has thought proper to fill five and twenty pages of his pamphlet with a re-impreſſion of theſe Notes, he ſhould certainly have given a complete and correct copy of them. But I have collated what Mr. B. has given p. 35—39, as a copy of Mr. Chauvelin's Note of Dec. 27, 1792, and have found it very defective. Mr. Chauvelin, according to Mr. B. p. 35, "*begins* by declaring," That the French Government, &c. But in reality Mr. Chauvelin *begins* with a paragraph, which Mr. Belſham has wholly omitted. He has likewiſe omitted ſeveral paſſages in the body of the Note, without giving any indication of ſuch omiſſions. And what he *has* given is not always in the preciſe words of the original. From ſuch a garbled copy it is impoſſible to form an adequate idea of Mr. Chauvelin's Note.

they

they are made only *en passant*, in two marginal notes, the one in page 60, the other in page 67.

The first of them is made on an *inference*, which I drew in ch. xiii. note 77, from the following assertion of Le Brun, the French minister for foreign affairs; that a rupture with England would be more contrary to the inclination than to the *interest* of the republic.—Having proved by unanswerable documents quoted in the tenth chapter, that Le Brun and many other leading men in France, entertained the *delusive hopes*, as Mr. Miles expresses it,* that a declaration of war against England would be immediately followed by an insurrection in this country, I took for granted that Le Brun, when he used the word "*interest*" in the above-mentioned declaration, had those *delusive hopes* in view. And as the tenth and twelfth chapters of my History con-

* Mr. Miles's testimony on this subject has been quoted, in the present pamphlet, in the vindication of ch. x.

tained proofs, (which Mr. B. himſelf has not attempted to confute) that the French rulers had not only an inſatiable thirſt after conqueſt and dominion in general, but that they were determined to engage in a war with England in particular, I conſidered the unguarded expreſſion, uſed by Le Brun, as an indication, that the execution of their plans againſt England, (the exiſtence of which had been proved by other means) was *not far diſtant.*—Such was the ſubſtance of my argument: and I leave it to the reader to determine, whether Le Brun's expreſſion, when all circumſtances are conſidered, contained ſuch an indication, or not. Mr. B. indeed anſwers in the negative, and ſays p. 60, that ſuch reaſoning as I have here* diſplayed

* Mr. B. declares likewiſe that "of *ſimilar* inſtances the volumes of Mr. M. are fertile." Now if in the preſent inſtance my reaſoning is ſolid, the greater the number of ſimilar inſtances, the worſe it will be for Mr. Belſham. On the other hand, if in the preſent inſtance my mode of reaſoning ſhould be deemed incorrect, Mr. B. will not be entitled to argue from it to other

difplayed " demonftrates that nothing can be fo plainly expreffed, as to be incapable of perverfion." But he has neither proved my perverfion, nor confuted my argument. He has difplayed nothing more than an attempt, to convert the argument into ridicule by an imperfect reprefentation of it. There is no neceffity therefore for faying a word more on the fubject.

Mr. Belfham's fecond attack, which is likewife on an inference, is directed againft the 108th note to ch. xii. where I made fome remarks on the following declaration of the Executive Council. " It has re-
" nounced, and ftill renounces all conqueft:
" and its occupying the Netherlands will
" continue no longer, than the war, and
" during that time, which may be neceffary
" for the Belgians to fecure and confolidate
" this liberty: after which, provided they
" be independent or happy, France will be

other examples, which he has *not* produced. It is eafy to make general affertions: the difficulty is, to prove them by defcending to particulars.

" fufficiently

"sufficiently rewarded."—On this subject Mr. Belsham has informed his readers p. 67, that "Mr. M. has boldly asserted that at the very time the Executive Council wrote thus sentimentally on the pretended independence of the Belgians, it was fully determined to incorporate Belgia into France." Mr. B. then immediately adds: "To talk or to write very sentimentally is indeed always a just ground of suspicion." Here his readers may naturally imagine, that I had argued from the sentimental mode of writing adopted by the Executive Council; whereas the whole of my proof was founded on *facts*, and moreover on facts, which Mr. B. himself has not presumed to call in question. He says indeed, that the French government would have given up the annexation of the Netherlands to France, rather than involve the country in a war with the maritime powers: and, what is truly curious, he declares, that the documents, which I have produced, tend only to confirm this opinion. Not to trouble the reader however with a repetition of all the documents,

which were quoted in Ch. XIII. Note 108, I will mention only the following declaration of General Dumouriez, who was well acquainted with the real views of the Executive Council. "L'intention *ſecrete* à Paris n'était point que le peuple Liegois, *et encore moins celui de la Belgique*, ſe réunît en corps de nation, pour ſe donner une conſtitution et des loix. *On craignait* qu'une fois aſſemblés ces deux peuples ne connuſſent leurs forces, *et ne fondaſſent une républiqne independanté*." This declaration, and many other documents, all tending to confirm the opinion, that the real deſign of the French government was, not to convert the Netherlands into an independent ſtate, but to annex them to France, were quoted at full length in Ch. XIII, Note 108. Mr. Belſham therefore took for granted, that the perſons, for whoſe benefit he was writing, would never look into my Hiſtory: or he would hardly have been ſo weak, as to aſſure them, that my documents confirmed *his* opinion. With reſpect to the argument, uſed by Mr. B. at the bottom of page 67, that the queſtion of incorporation was not determined

by the French commiſſaries at Bruſſels till Feb. 3, 1793, two days after the French Convention had declared war, it is the moſt futile, that can be imagined. The mere circumſtance, that a ſecret intention, as Dumouriez calls it, was not formally put in execution, till Feb. 3, 1793, cannot afford even a preſumption, that no ſuch intention previouſly exiſted. Beſides, though the French Commiſſaries did not meet at Bruſſels to ſettle the queſtion before Feb. 3, 1793, they had received their inſtructions above three weeks before; and the ſpecial inſtructions given to Chauſſard, who was the leading man, and who afterwards publiſhed the whole proceedings, are dated Dec. 31, 1793. But, for further particulars on this ſubject, I muſt refer to Ch. XIII. Note 108.

Having repelled the objections, which Mr. B. has made to *my* Commentary on the diplomatic papers, which paſſed between the Britiſh and French Governments, I proceed to the examination of *his* Commentary on the ſame papers, to which, I fear, I ſhall have a much greater number than *two* objections to make.

As

As the negotiation, which was conducted by Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin, did not prevent the breaking out of hostilities, Mr. Belsham's avowed object is to transfer the blame of its failure from the French to the British Government: and his zeal for this noble cause has roused him to more strenuous exertions, than he appears to have displayed in all the rest of his pamphlet put together.

After laying before the reader a copy, though an incorrect one, of Mr. Chauvelin's Note of December 27, 1792, he begins at page 39, to make his remarks on it. He previously admits "the *rudeness* of Mr. Chauvelin's language: but notwithstanding his rudeness, his Note, says Mr. B. "certainly contained *great concessions*, especially if we consider them as made voluntarily at the commencement of a negotiation, and when the progress of their arms had received no check." These great concessions, according to Mr. Belsham's statement, were as follow.—First, "the offensive meaning of the decree of the 19th November was formally and expressly disavowed." Secondly, a positive and voluntary declaration

was made, "that France would not attack Holland, if that power did not violate its neutrality." "Laftly, (fays Mr. B.) by profeffing to treat the opening of the Schelde as a *trivial queftion*, the memorial furnifhes a ready falvo for the French honour, if the French Government fhould in the progrefs of the negotiation confent to abandon it."—Now it is true that the Executive Council endeavoured to explain away the meaning of the decree in queftion: but fince Mr. B. himfelf admits not only that this decree, in its firft and obvious meaning, is *indefenfible* *, but even that the interpretation of it by the Executive Council "appears fomewhat *ftrained and forced* †," it is extraordinary that he fhould fet fuch a value on this pretended great conceffion. But if Mr. B. had not thus confuted his own argument, it would be unneceffary to fay any thing more on this fubject, as I have already given abundant proof, in the notes to Ch. XIII. that the Executive Council, in its explanation of the decree, was guilty of the blackeft hypocrify,

* P. 72. † P. 49.

and

and made declarations with the conſciouſneſs of their falſehood. But, ſays Mr. B. again, p. 39, " If France really wiſhed to break with England, it is the groſſeſt of ſoleciſms to believe, that ſhe would have degraded herſelf (for in the light of a degradation it muſt in that caſe appear to her) by ſuch a diſavowal." It is the groſſeſt of ſoleciſms then to believe in the truth: for the French rulers not only wiſhed, but were determined to break with England, at the very time they diſavowed the application of the decree to England. But what moſt clearly ſhews the abſurdity, and in fact the infamy, of the *diſavowal* brought forward in Mr. Chauvelin's Note of Dec. 27, is the formal *avowal*, made in the National Convention only three days before, that it was their real intention to apply the decree to England *. Beſides, it is ridiculous to found an argument on the ſuppoſition, that the French rulers would not have choſen to *degrade* themſelves; for, as French philoſophy and French republicaniſm triumphed over

* See Ch. xii. Note 36.

honour and religion, they did not confider themfelves as degraded by falfehood and hypocrify.

The declaration refpecting Holland, which, according to Mr. Belfham, is the fecond of the *great conceffions*, proves only the duplicity, with which the Executive Council acted toward the Britifh Government: and Mr. B. would have acted wifely, if he had been filent upon this article, as well as on the preceding: for it was only fourteen days after the folemn promife had been given, *not* to attack Holland, that pofitive orders were fent for the immediate invafion of it *.

Laftly, when Mr. Belfham talks about the Executive Council's "profeffing to treat the opening of the Schelde *as a trivial queftion,*" one can hardly hear it without a fmile. If fuch a conceffion is at all fatisfactory, the Emperor of Ruffia has nothing more to do, than to *profefs*, in imitation of the French Executive Council, to treat the feizure of our mer-

* This fubject was fully difcuffed above, in the Vindication of Ch. xii.

chant

chant ſhips as a *trivial queſtion,* and whatever importance *we* may attach to it, we muſt ſtill reſt ſatisfied with his profeſſions. But, ſays Mr. B. "by profeſſing to treat the opening of the Schelde as a *trivial queſtion,* the memorial furniſhes a ready ſalvo for *French honour, &c.*" Now this ſalvo for French *honour* was very unfortunately choſen; for, according to Mr. Belſham's own account in another place,* the ſalvo contains a *falſehood.*

It appears then, that Mr. Belſham's remarks on the Note of Mr. Chauvelin have rendered no ſervice to the cauſe, which they were deſigned to promote. Let us next hear what he has to ſay on Lord Grenville's reply, which he has preſented to his readers in p. 41—49. In the firſt place, Mr. B. complains that Lord Grenville put the worſt poſſible conſtruction upon the decree of November 19; that he took for granted England was included in the ſcope of it; and that he re-

* Mr. B. ſays, p. 64, "The French Government had ſtyled the opening of the Schelde a trivial queſtion, *which it certainly was not.*"

fuſed to admit any explanation, which might tend to remove or rectify whatever outrage had been occaſioned by it.—But Lord Grenville put no other conſtruction on the decree, than that which the French rulers themſelves openly put on it in the National Convention *: when he took for granted that England was included in the ſcope of it, he was authoriſed, not only by the conduct of the National Convention on Nov. 28, but by the unanimous reſolution which paſſed in the Convention † on Dec. 24: and, when he refuſed to admit Mr. Chauvelin's explanation, it was becauſe the explanation contained the groſſeſt falſehoods.

* See Ch. xiii. Note 41.

† Ch. xii. Note 36. Though this reſolution, which was an official avowal on the part of the National Convention, that the decree of Nov. 19, ſhould really be applied to England, was not unknown to Mr. Belſham, for he has quoted it, p. 32, yet he has dared to aſſert, p. 50, that "that this decree could not with any plauſi-"bility of conſtruction be ſuppoſed to extend to Eng-"land." When an author makes aſſertions, which flatly contradict authentic documents, with which he himſelf is acquainted, what opinion muſt that man entertain of the perſons, for whom he writes?

Mr.

Mr. B. complains (p. 50) of the "impolitic conduct of England, in refusing to recognise the provisional government of France," and says (p. 81) that "the English Government was *in consequence* treated upon many occasions, in that assembly, with great rudeness and indignity." Now if Mr. Belsham means that Lord Grenville's note contained a refusal to acknowledge the new French Government, he is incorrect. Lord Grenville declared indeed, that Mr. Chauvelin, who had then no other credentials, than those which he had received from Louis XVI. could not be admitted to treat under the form stated in his note: but he expressly said at the same time, that he reserved the question, whether the British Cabinet would acknowledge the French Republic, for future discussion. But even if Lord Grenville had at that time (as he did afterwards under different circumstances) answered the question in the negative, still the insults and indignities offered to the British government, could not be considered as a *consequence* of the refusal, because very great insults and indignities had been offered to the British Government

vernment in the preceding month of November, before the British Government had been even asked, whether it would acknowledge the French Republic or not. On the other hand, if Mr. Belsham alludes to a different period from that to which the present subject relates, if he has in view the recall of Lord Gower, and considers that step as a tacit refusal to acknowledge the French Republic, enough has been said on that subject in Ch. IX. To his assertion (p. 51), that Mr. Chauvelin "ought to have been acknowledged as the accredited minister of the French Republic," I answer, that it was *impossible* to receive him in that character, before he was invested with it; but when Lord Grenville sent his note of Dec. 31, 1792, Mr. Chauvelin had received no credentials from the new government of France,* as Le Brun himself acknowledged in his note of Jan. 7, 1793. For a confutation of Mr. B's opinion that an ambassador should have been sent to Paris, I

* Mr. Chauvelin did not produce credentials from the new Government of France, till Jan. 17, 1793, when the question of war or peace was already decided.

must

muſt refer the reader to what was ſaid on that ſubject in the latter part of Ch. XI.

Mr. B. complains (p. 51) that Lord Grenville put a moſt harſh and *unwarrantable* interpretation on the explanation, which was given of the decree of Nov. 19. But Lord Grenville's interpretation was warranted by undeniable *facts*, of which I have given a very copious collection in the notes to Ch. XIII. He further complains (p. 52) of Lord Grenville's alluding, as he ſays, "in the moſt invidious manner, in this moment of *amicable eclairciſſement*, to the moſt invidious proceedings of the Convention, proceedings which he knew the Executive Council could not controul." Now as the explanations which were given in Mr. Chauvelin's note, contained the groſſeſt falſehoods, as, inſtead of offering indemnity for the paſt and ſecurity for the future, they increaſed only the inſults which had been already offered to the Britiſh Government, they furniſhed a very curious kind of *amicable eclairciſſement*. It is likewiſe very extraordinary that Lord Grenville ſhould be blamed for alluding to the obnoxious proceedings

ceedings of the French Convention. For whether the Executive Council could controul them or not, yet, as this council professed it to be their object, in the negotiation then pending, to remove the complaints of the British Government, relative to the decree of November 19, and other acts of the Convention, an allusion to those acts in Lord Grenville's reply was perfectly consistent. But it is in fact absurd to talk about the inability of the Executive Council, to check the violent proceedings of the Convention, when this Council had no *desire* to check them: for it went still greater lengths than the Convention itself, as appears from a comparison of its commentary on the decree of Dec. 15, with the decree itself.

To make Lord Grenville appear ridiculous, Mr. B. has taken the liberty (p. 52) to alter his Lordship's words, and to make him declare "that England must consider the *disavowal* "of the French Government as a fresh *avowal* "of those dispositions, which she sees with so "just an uneasiness and jealousy." This pretty antithesis is entirely the work of Mr. Bel-

sham:

ſham: for the words uſed by Lord Grenville were, "England cannot conſider ſuch an *ex-"planation* as ſatisfactory, but muſt look upon "it as a freſh *avowal* of thoſe diſpoſitions, "which ſhe ſees with ſo juſt an uneaſineſs "and jealouſy." And that the *explanation*, or rather pretended explanation, offered by the Executive Council, really did contain a freſh *avowal* of a diſpoſition, on the part of the French rulers, to encourage diſorder and revolt in every country, Lord Grenville had ſhewn immediately before the paſſage, which Mr. B. has ſo inaccurately reported.

Mr. B. is of opinion (p. 52) that all diſcuſſions about the opening of the Schelde, ſhould have been deferred to a later period: and he cenſures Lord Grenville for dwelling upon this point. But it was not merely the *fact* itſelf, which, as being an infringement on the rights of the Dutch, we were bound by treaty to oppoſe; it was the *principle* eſtabliſhed by it, which demanded the attention of the Britiſh Government: for this principle was nothing leſs, than that the French had a right to infringe the moſt ſolemn treaties, and to act as the

the arbitrators of all Europe. Surely ſuch a principle as this could not be oppoſed too ſoon: and it would have been well for Europe, if this principle, on which the French have continued to act, had been more generally oppoſed, than it has been.

Laſtly, Mr. Belſham objects to the *terms of peace*, which were offered by the Britiſh Government: and he ſays (p. 53) that "they "contain a propoſition too extravagant to "become the topic of ſerious deliberation."— Now theſe terms were delivered in the following ſentence of Lord Grenville's Note. "If "France is really deſirous of maintaining "friendſhip and peace with England, ſhe "muſt ſhew herſelf diſpoſed, *to renounce her* "*views of aggreſſion and aggrandizement, and* "*to confine herſelf within her own territory,* "*without inſulting other governments, without* "*diſturbing their tranquillity, without violating* "*their rights.*" Theſe conditions were, on the one hand, neceſſary for the ſecurity of Great Britain; and, on the other hand, they could not be conſidered as injurious to France, becauſe they were nothing more, than what

the French rulers themſelves, from the commencement of the revolution, had declared to be the baſis of their new ſyſtem of politicks. The renunciation of conqueſt and aggrandizement had been moſt ſolemnly profeſſed in manifeſtoes, decrees, and every kind of document: and the Executive Council itſelf, in the Note of Jan. 7, 1792, again declared, that "*France has renounced and ſtill renounces all conqueſt.*" In fact, therefore, the "extravagant propoſition," as Mr. B. calls it, contained nothing more than a propoſal, that France ſhould remain true to its own principles.

Mr. Belſham having diſcuſſed the note of Lord Grenville, proceeds, after making a few quotations from a ſpeech of Kerſaint, which are of no importance in the preſent inquiry, to lay before his readers the note of the Executive Council of Jan. 7, 1793. He calls it *the olive branch of reconciliation*;* but he has

* It is to be obſerved that in this *olive branch* the terms of peace offered by the Britiſh Government were *rejected*; and at the ſame time a formal declaration was made in it, that if the explanations given by the Executive Council were not deemed ſatisfactory, and the preparations

very little to ſay about it, and that little is contained in four marginal remarks. Moreover, two of thoſe remarks have been already noticed at the beginning of this chapter, as they contain the two attacks upon me, which I there noticed. The third of them, which is in p. 61, contains an attack upon Lord Grenville, who is cenſured for his reply about the opening of the Schelde. In order to juſtify this cenſure, Mr. B. aſſerts, that the French Executive Council did not mean "ſtrenuouſly to inſiſt" on the opening of the Schelde: in proof of which aſſertion he appeals to his favorite argument—their profeſſing to treat the ſubject as a *trivial queſtion*—which, he ſays, is ſtrong evidence, that they did not mean ſtrenuouſly to inſiſt upon their claim. This argument is too ridiculous to merit ſerious confu-

parations in the Britiſh ports, were not conſequently diſcontinued, France would *prepare for war*, though it was manifeſt, that explanations replete with falſehood could not be ſatisfactory, and that the Britiſh Government, after its propoſals of peace had been rejected, could not conſent to diſarm, without expoſing the kingdom to the danger of being invaded by France.

tation;

tation; and Mr. Belſham's aſſertion, that the French Government did not mean ſtrenuouſly to inſiſt on the opening of the Schelde, is made in defiance of documents, of which he could hardly have been ignorant. For not only did the Executive Council, in the note of Jan. 7, 1793, again inſiſt, and very ſtrenuouſly, on this point, but they ſent inſtructions to Mr. Chauvelin, *not to recede from it.** His fourth and laſt remark on the diſpatch of the Executive Council, contains an attempt to account for for ſome uncivil expreſſions in it, which he ſays Le Brun introduced merely becauſe "without ſome ſlight expreſſions of re-"ſentment, he was probably apprehenſive, "that this paper might be conſidered as *too* "*tame and ſubmiſſive.*" But Le Brun had certainly no reaſon to entertain any ſuch apprehenſions.

* This was particularly noted in chap. xiii. note 93, and this note relates to that *very part* of the diſpatch of the Executive Council, to which Mr. Belſham's own remark relates. It is inconceivable therefore, that he ſhould have been ignorant of it, unleſs (as is perhaps the caſe) he has read my Hiſtory ſo very ſuperficially, as to be unable to form any judgment about the matter.

Finally Mr. B. produces Lord Grenville's reply to the note of the Executive Council, and attempts, p. 72, " to criticiſe (as he ſays) ſomewhat in detail the contents of it." This criticiſm he begins with the following aſſertion. " Nothing being objected on the " part of Lord Grenville, according to the " obſervation of M. Le Brun, to the declaration " reſpecting Holland, the diſpute is reduced " to two heads." Now it is true, that Le Brun did make the obſervation, which Mr. B. has here repeated; but in a long note, which I compoſed on that very obſervation,* and which Mr. B. therefore could hardly have overlooked, I clearly proved that Le Brun aſſerted a falſehood. Mr. Belſham therefore ſhould not have repeated it, not even with the ſaving clauſe, " *according to the obſervation* " *of M. Le Brun:*" for, though he has thus prudently transferred all reſponſibility to the French miniſter, he nevertheleſs leads his readers into error.

* Chap. xiii. note 87.

Mr. Belſham's next article of criticiſm relates to Lord Grenville's objection to the explanation, which had been given of the decree of Nov. 19. " That the decree, (ſays " Mr. B. p. 72) in its firſt and obvious mean-" ing was *indefenſible*, is unqueſtionable; but, " as the Government of France thought fit to " put a friendly, however *forced*, interpretation " upon it, *that interpretation ought undoubted-" ly to have been admitted*." To give ſome kind of plauſibility to this ſtrange poſition he adds, p. 73, " When no *act* has been done, " and nothing but a ſuppoſed principle, or " general diſpoſition is complained of, an ex-" preſs diſavowal of ſuch principle, and de-" nial of ſuch intention ought to be accepted, " becauſe it is all that the caſe admits of."—But ſurely Mr. Belſham, if he reflects one moment, will not pretend, that the decree of Nov. 19, was accompanied by no *act*, which proved, that the National Convention was determined to regulate its conduct by that decree. Was not every ſolemn reception of deputations from Britiſh ſocieties, who at the bar

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of the French Convention, declared their resolution to overturn the British Constitution, an *overt act?* Did not the numerous examples of encouragement, which was given to those societies, constitute *overt acts?* And was it not an *overt act*, when the President of the Convention, on Nov. 28, 1792, declared to one of those deputations, "that the time was "not far distant, when Frenchmen would "come to congratulate the National Conven- "tion of Great Britain?" Was it not again an *overt act*, when the French Convention, on Dec. 24, 1792, resolved that the decree in question, *should* be applied to Great Britain? If Mr. B. is not satisfied with such *acts* as these, I know not what will content him.

"But if a cavilling negotiator (replies Mr. "B. p. 73), in the spirit of a chicaning at- "torney, will not allow the persons with "whom he negotiates, to understand their "own meaning, if he will obstinately insist, "that they are incompetent to explain their "own declarations, what can any farther dis- "cussion avail?" Here Mr. B. is rather in-

correct.

correct. Lord Grenville by no means denied that the persons, with whom he negotiated, understood their own meaning: but he suspected, and with great reason, that what they *themselves* understood, was different from the meaning, which they endeavoured to impose upon *him*. Nor did he declare, that they were *incompetent* to explain their own declarations: he only asserted, what was perfectly true, that the explanations, which they thought proper to give, were *unsatisfactory*.

On Lord Grenville's complaint of the outrageous proceedings of the Convention, Mr. B. remarks, p. 74, "As England had no ambassador in France at that time, the English "Court could have no regular or official information of what passed in the Convention, "and could have *no regular right therefore to* "*complain of it*." As well might Mr. B. have said, that we had no regular right to complain of the seizure of all our merchant ships in the ports of Russia, because, when the order for such seizure was given, we had no ambassador at Petersburgh. The Moniteur

contained official information enough in the one caſe, as the Peterſburgh Gazette did in the other.

With reſpect to Lord Grenville's obſervation on the infringing of treaties, and the violating the rights of our allies, Mr. B. admits, that the apology, which Le Brun had made on that ſubject, "though ingenious and plau-"ſible, was founded upon *very queſtionable and* "*fallacious data.*" "But the validity of the "*abſtract* reaſonings of the French Miniſter "(continues Mr. B. p. 75,) is of very little "conſequence. The material queſtion is, "what are his *practical* conceſſions?" Now, if the term "*practical* conceſſions" conveys any meaning, it can ſignify only ſuch conceſſions, as a man makes or expreſſes by his actual *practice* or conduct. But the misfortune is, the conceſſions made by the French Government in *words* were flatly contradicted by their *practice*: and Le Brun had the aſſurance, in his Note of January 7, to declare, "that "France has renounced and ſtill renounces "all conqueſt," when the Duchy of Savoy, about

about five weeks before, had been incorporated into France by a solemn and unanimous decree of the National Convention ?* If Lord Grenville therefore had given credit to this,

* Mr. Belsham, aware of this objection, as he had already seen it in my History, has very artfully said, p. 77, "It is probable indeed that France, even at this time, would not have receded from her plan of incorporating Savoy with her own domain." Here the use of the word "*plan*" must necessarily induce Mr. Belsham's readers to suppose, that when Le Brun signed the note of Jan. 7, 1793, the incorporation of Savoy was only in agitation: whereas the solemn act of incorporation, which I quoted in Ch. X. Note 3, passed in the preceding month of November. Such little artifices as these may be deemed expedient by Mr. Belsham: but he may be assured they will render him no service in the end. Further, to palliate the incorporation of Savoy, he adds, that it was "to England a very inferior consideration." Now no one will deny, that it was of much less importance to England, than the incorporation of the Netherlands. But what is that to our present purpose? Did the incorporation of Savoy cease therefore to contradict Le Brun's declaration, that "France has renounced, and still renounces *all* conquest?" Did it afford, therefore, a less valid proof, that the French rulers were insincere in their negociations with England? Or was Lord Grenville the less authorized to reply, that Le Brun's declaration was unsatisfactory?

and other ſimilar declarations of the French miniſter, he would have ſhewn, that he was no more qualified to conduct the negotiation, than Mr. Belſham himſelf would have been, who, ſpeaking of the fine profeſſions of Le Brun, ſays p. 76, that "an *able* ſtateſman would "have wiſhed for no *fairer* opening for a "general treaty."

Here ends the diſcuſſion of Mr. Belſham's commentary on the negotiation between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin: and the reader will now be able to determine, whether in his attempt to transfer the blame of its failure from the French to the Britiſh Government, he has met with the expected ſucceſs.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Belſham has objected to *three inferences* in this chapter.

His firſt objection relates to an inference, which I had deduced from the following circumſtance; that the French Executive Council, on Jan. 7, 1793, the very day on which they ſigned that Note to the Britiſh Government,

ment, which Mr. B. calls *the olive-branch of reconciliation,* ſigned another Note deſtined for the French ſea-ports, and of the ſame tendency as the circular Letter of Monge, the marine miniſter, which had been ſigned eight days before, and which contained the following paſſage. " *We will make a deſcent on that* " *iſland; we will hurl thither fifty thouſand* " *caps of liberty; we will plant there the ſa-* " *cred tree, and ſtretch out our arms to our* " *brother republicans; the tyranny of their go-* " *vernment ſhall ſoon be deſtroyed.*"* Hence I inferred† that the Executive Council, who in their Note of Jan. 7, to the Britiſh Government, pretended a reſpect for exiſting conſtitutions, and a deſire to continue in peace with Great Britain, acted with glaring duplicity. And this duplicity was ſo manifeſt in the whole of their conduct, and the numerous examples which I alleged in Ch. XIII. are ſo deciſive on the ſubject, that it ſeems almoſt im-

* It is to be obſerved that Monge was a leading member of the French Executive Council, whoſe conduct Mr. B. ſays (p. 33) was "*far more temperate*" than that of the Convention.

† Ch. XIV. Note 2.

poſſible

possible to entertain a doubt upon it. Indeed Mr. B. himself has not objected to any of the examples in Ch. XIII: but this *additional* example in Ch. XIV. was too much for him to bear, and he has accordingly burst forth (p. 85.) in the following strain. "Were the French "then to make no preparations for war, nor "to offer any incitement to the national ar-"dor, in the full prospect of a war, merely "because they were engaged in a negotiation "for peace? Is it fair or just to style *that* hy-"pocrisy in France, which in any other nation "would be regarded as the result of prudence, "or indeed of common sense?"—No, Mr. Belsham, certainly not! But I hope we may be allowed to consider *that* as hypocrisy in the French rulers, which would be deemed hypocrisy in all other men. It may be readily admitted, that if the Executive Council, instead of acting offensively, had been threatened with an attack on our part, they would have acted wisely in making vigorous preparations in the ports of France. And even, though the French naval preparations commenced, not only three months before a single step had been taken in the

the Britiſh ports, but at a time, when by the acknowledgment of the French Convention,* we had in no reſpect violated the neutrality toward France, it may be ſtill admitted that thoſe preparations *alone* are no proof that the French Cabinet was determined at all events on a war with Great Britain, or that the negotiation was commenced merely to amuſe the Britiſh Government, till the plan of attack was ripe for execution. But, when at the very outſet of the negotiation, before it was poſſible that Lord Grenville's anſwer to Mr. Chauvelin's *firſt* Note could be known in France, a circular Letter, ſigned by the Miniſter of the marine, and denouncing a fixed reſolution to invade England, to join the diſaffected, and to overthrow the government, was ſent to the ſea-port towns of France: when, in addition to this, a ſecond letter of the ſame tendency was ſigned by the Executive Council on the very day, that the ſecond Note to the Britiſh Government was ſigned, we cannot have ſtronger proofs, that the Executive Council did not wait the iſſue of the

* See Ch. XI. Note 50.

negotiation

negotiation to determine the queſtion of peace or war, but that they had *previouſly* determined it. Conſequently, when they profeſſed a deſire to continue at peace with Great Britain, their profeſſions were fraught with hypocriſy. Mr. Belſham perhaps will explain the conduct of the Executive Council on the hypotheſis, that the French rulers themſelves really *did* wiſh for peace; but that they believed the Britiſh Cabinet was reſolved on war, and acted accordingly. Indeed he has very artfully inſinuated this hypotheſis on various occaſions: but both parts of the hypotheſis are falſe. That the French rulers breathed nothing but war, and war with all Europe, has been proved over and over again, in the ſeventh, tenth, twelfth, and fourteenth chapters of my Hiſtory: Kerſaint, a leading orator of the Convention, acknowledged in his ſpeech of Jan. 1, 1793, not only that "Mr. Pitt wiſhed for peace", but that his councils governed the nation :* even the violent dema-

* He uſed the ſtrong expreſſion "maître abſolu de l'Angleterre." Compare Ch. X. Note 47, with Ch. XI. Note 53.

gogue,

gogue, Carra, in his ſpeech of Jan. 2, ſaid to the Convention, "be aſſured that it is *not* the intention of the Britiſh Cabinet to go to war:"* and both Briſſot and Dumouriez have acknowledged in their writings, that the French rulers, if they had choſen it, might have avoided a war with Great Britain.† The conduct of the Executive Council therefore, cannot be explained on the preceding hypotheſis; and conſequently the inference which I drew in regard to their duplicity, reſts unimpaired. When Mr. Belſham then accuſed me (p. 85) in reſpect to this very inference, of ſuffering my prejudices to carry me ſuch lengths of party zeal, he would have done well to have conſidered whether his zeal for *his own* party was not carried to an injudicious exceſs. And when Mr. Belſham added, "it "is neceſſary to read with extreme caution "whatever he may write, and to credit rather "what he ſhall prove than what he ſhall ſay," my gentle adverſary ſhould have recollected that in my Hiſtory I have proved *every* thing, whereas Mr. Belſham, in his own Hiſtories, has

* Ch. XI. Note 53. † Ch. XI. Note 52.

proved *nothing*. I have made it a rule to ſupport every fact by *authority*, which cannot be called in queſtion: but Mr. Belſham has given only his *bare word*, which, if I may be permitted to uſe the ſame expreſſion toward him as he has uſed toward me, the numerous examples of his incorrectneſs, alleged in this pamphlet, muſt induce even his admirers, to admit in future with "*extreme caution*."

The ſecond attack is likewiſe made on an inference relative to the duplicity of the French rulers, which I drew from two paſſages in the writings of Dumouriez. "This "(ſays Mr. B. p. 86) is a mere wire-drawn "concluſion of Mr. Marſh; for Dumouriez "never repreſents France as inſincere in her "attempts to effect an accommodation, "though he expreſsly charges Mr. Pitt with "duplicity as to the negotiation, in which he "himſelf was concerned." Mr. B. then quotes the following paſſage from Dumouriez, in which the charge is contained: "On "pourrait croire que le Miniſtre Pitt n'aurait "voulu qu' amuſe le Général Dumouriez."— Now it is of no importance to my argument

(which

(which is contained in the second paragraph of the fourteenth chapter) whether Dumouriez has represented the French rulers as insincere in their negotiation or not. But he really *has* represented them as insincere in the negotiation: for in the first volume of his Memoirs, where he speaks of his own residence in Paris, at the beginning of Jan. 1793, while Le Brun was carrying on the negotiation with England, and at the same time concerting measures with Dumouriez for the next campaign, he expressly says, that "*Le Brun* "*desired the General to pay no regard to the* "*negotiation.*" Surely there cannot be a stronger representation of insincerity, than this; nor a stronger proof that Le Brun carried on the negotiation merely to amuse the British Government. It is very extraordinary therefore, that Mr. B. should presume to declare that "Dumouriez never represents France as insincere in her attempts to effect an accommodation," because he could not have been ignorant of the passage just quoted, as it is quoted likewise in that very paragraph, to which his present objection relates.—He is equally reprehensible

prehensible for his *unqualified* repetition* of the charge, which Dumouriez has brought against Mr. Pitt relative to the negotiation, which Dumouriez himself set on foot: for not only does this charge contain a palpable falsehood, as I proved at length in Ch. XV. note 62, but Mr. Belsham himself *knows*, that it contains a falsehood.†

His third and last objection to Ch. XIV. relates to an inference, which I deduced from a speech delivered by Carra, a leading and vio-

* By the term "*unqualified* repetition," I mean a repetition of the charge, without qualifying it with any remark, whether it be true or false; whence Mr. Belsham's readers may imagine, that it is true, or at least, that their author has no objection to make to it.

† I do not argue merely from the supposition that Mr. B. could not have been ignorant of the long Note (Ch. XV. Note 62) in which the proof of the falsehood was conducted at full length, but from a confession, which he himself has made in another part of his pamphlet: for in p. 114, where he again speaks of this charge, and again quotes the passage, "On pourrait croire, &c." he says, "in this *conjecture* however, Dumouriez was probably *mistaken*." Why then did Mr. B. quote this mistaken conjecture in p. 86, without making one single remark on it?

lent member of the Convention, on Jan. 2, 1792. If I underſtand Mr. B. rightly, he means, that my inference was too *general*, and that I argued from Carra's ſpeech, in which regal power in general, and the Britiſh Government in particular, was groſsly abuſed, as if that ſpeech conveyed the ſentiments of the major part of the Convention: for he ſays (p. 87) " as well might it have been inferred " from the furious invective of *Mr. Burke* in " the Britiſh Houſe of Commons, February, " 1790, that the Britiſh *Parliament* had, at " that period, determined upon a rupture with " France." But if Mr. B. will condeſcend once more to read Ch. XIV. he will find, that the ſentiments delivered by Carra were by no means confined to that orator: he will find quotations in that chapter from the ſpeeches of Danton, Barrere, Barbaroux, Rémi, Ducos, Treilhard, Gregoire, and Briſſot, which contain ſimilar ſentiments, though not ſo violently expreſſed. And, if he is not ſatisfied with theſe quotations, he muſt certainly be convinced by the ſolemn declaration of *all* the members of the National Aſſembly, who

on Sept. 4, 1792, exclaimed, as if by inſtantaneous impulſe, that *they all ſwore hatred to kings and to royalty*.* When Carra, therefore, expreſſed his hatred of his Britannic Majeſty, he expreſſed the ſentiments of the Convention at large, unleſs Mr. B. can prove, that notwithſtanding "the licentious enthuſiaſm "of that democratic and anarchic body," (as Mr. Belſham himſelf ſpeaks p. 28) a particular exception was made in favor of the King of Great Britain.

Mr. B. has concluded his remarks on Ch. XIV. with ſome extracts from a ſpeech of Briſſot, with which he has filled ten pages. His object, in ſo doing, as he ſays p. 88, was "to aſſiſt us in forming a judgment of the "*real* views and intentions of the governing "party in France." But as he tells us at the bottom of the page, that the firſt and main poſition of this ſpeech† was "*contrary* to the

* I quoted this exclamation in Ch. XIV. Note 20, only a few pages before the place, to which Mr. Belſham's preſent objection relates; and therefore one can hardly ſuppoſe, that he was ignorant of it.

† Namely, "that the complaints of the Britiſh Cabinet againſt France have no juſt foundation."

real

real opinion of Mr. Briſſot," it is not probable that many readers will follow the directions of Mr. Belſham, and have recourſe to this ſpeech of Briſſot, in order to diſcover his *real* ſentiments.

CHAP. XV.*

Though Mr. Belſham has made ſeveral objections to paſſages in this chapter, there is only one, which is of importance, or which affects the main queſtion. It relates to the refuſal of the Britiſh Cabinet on Jan. 20, 1793, to receive Mr. Chauvelin's new credentials, which refuſal Lord Grenville ſignified to Mr. Chauvelin in the following words. "In anſwer to the demand you now make, whether "his Majeſty will receive your new letters of "credence, I have to inform you, that *under* "*the preſent circumſtances*, his Majeſty does "not think proper to receive them." Now the queſtion, whether this anſwer is defen-

* This is the laſt chapter which I have to vindicate; for Mr. Belſham has made no remarks on Ch. XVI. though the title of his fifth ſection (p. 101) profeſſes to contain remarks on both.

 ſible,

ſible, or not, depends on the meaning, which ought to be affixed to the term, " preſent circumſtances." Mr. Belſham, aware of this, has deemed it expedient, at the very outſet of his inquiry, (p. 101,) to interpret, " *under theſe circumſtances*," in the following manner: " *While a negotiation was depending between the* " *two countries of the higheſt importance, and the* " *ſucceſs of which might depend on the recognition* " *of the ambaſſador.*" But whatever art Mr. B. may have here diſplayed, he has certainly diſplayed very little candor; for he has aſcribed to Lord Grenville's words a meaning, which the writer himſelf could not poſſibly intend to expreſs, and which indeed the words themſelves do not admit. That on Jan. 20, 1793, the day on which the refuſal was made, the negotiation between Lord Grenville and Mr. Chauvelin was *ſtill depending*, is an aſſertion, which I had fully confuted in the Hiſtory of the Politicks of Great Britain and France. It was on Jan. 13, that the note of the Executive Council, containing their ultimatum, was delivered by Mr. Chauvelin to Lord Grenville; and from that moment it was manifeſt, that it

was

was no longer in the power of the Britiſh miniſters to prevent a rupture with France.* The fate of the two countries was from that moment decided; and conſequently we cannot reckon events, which took place in the latter half of January, among the *cauſes* of the war. They might ſerve indeed as pretexts to juſtify an aggreſſion, but the *real* cauſes, which are enumerated in Chap. XIV. had already produced their full effect. It is uſeleſs therefore, in inveſtigating the origin of the war, to inſiſt on the refuſal, expreſſed by the Britiſh Cabinet, on the 20th of January: but ſince Mr. Belſham, for want of better arguments, has thought proper to do it, and moreover to give a falſe explanation of the circumſtances, under which the anſwer was given, I muſt beg leave to refer the reader to Chap. XV. where he will find a faithful deſcription of the circumſtances, which Lord Grenville had in view. And thoſe circumſtances, when fairly ſtated, will fully juſtify the conduct of the Britiſh Cabinet on that occaſion.—To what Mr. Belſham has objected in p. 102 and 103, it is unneceſſary

* See the latter part of Ch. XIII.

to make an anſwer, becauſe thoſe objections are founded on the falſe ſuppoſition, that the exiſting circumſtances were ſuch as he has deſcribed them.

In anſwer to an obſervation, which I had made, in regard to the tendency of *great* Republics, ſuch as thoſe of Rome, Carthage, and France, to diſturb the repoſe of neighbouring nations, Mr. B. ſays, p. 104, " If " we take a retroſpective view of the hiſtory " of France for the laſt two hundred and fifty " years, what great Republic could be more " reſtleſs in itſelf than this great monarchy " for the firſt half of that term, or more diſ- " poſed to diſturb the peace of her neigh- " bours, than ſhe has moſt notoriouſly been " for the latter part of it ?"—Now I cannot pretend to ſay what idea Mr. B. affixes to the terms *repoſe* and *diſturbance* ; but according to their common acceptation, I think it muſt be allowed, that the French Republic has ſo effectually diſturbed the repoſe of her neighbours, as to have produced among them more political revolutions within the compaſs of ten years, than the French monarchy did during the whole period of its exiſtence.

Mr.

Mr. Belſham's next objection relates likewiſe to a curſory remark, which has no connexion with the main queſtion. It is therefore of no importance whether I am miſtaken or not: but as Mr. B. has ſhamefully garbled the remark, I cannot paſs it over in ſilence. Having ſpoken of "the energy, with which "the revolution inſpired the French in general, who fondly imagined that they were "fighting for the eſtabliſhment of their political liberty," I remarked in note 7, to Ch. XV. that the inhabitants of France had ſince diſcovered, that they had been fighting not ſo much for themſelves, as for a new ſet of deſpots. I then added: "The enthuſiaſm therefore of the French armies, *unleſs the fertility "of invention, which is characteriſtic of the "French rulers, furniſhes new means of inflaming "it*, will hardly be equal in future to that, "which was diſplayed at the commencement "of the war." The ſummer campaign of 1799, which took place after this note was written,* juſtified my opinion: for as the

* I firſt wrote my Hiſtory of the Politicks in German, which was publiſhed at Leipzig, in January 1799.

French army was then diſguſted with the Directory, it ſhewed very little of that wild enthuſiaſm, which had been diſplayed at the commencement of the war. On the other hand, Buonaparte has found new means of inflaming it: and in the laſt campaign we have ſeen the conſequence. In my propoſition therefore, which was merely hypothetical, there was certainly no abſurdity. But Mr. Belſham has thought proper to falſify the propoſition, in order to render it abſurd: for though he has quoted it (p. 105) with inverted commas, and has thus ſignified to his readers that he has produced the very words of the quoted author, he has ſuppreſſed in the middle of the quotation, the whole of the hypothetical clauſe *unleſs the fertility of invention*, &c. which I had cautiouſly inſerted, becauſe I well knew how great that fertility of invention really was. Having thus converted an hypothetical propoſition into an abſolute one, he ſays with great triumph, "To this reflection the victories of "the preſent campaign, and the wide extent "of Gallic conqueſts from the Po to the "Danube,

" Danube, have already afforded a very deci-
" ſive anſwer." Now when an author is reduced to the neceſſity of adopting ſuch pitiful artifices, when he is forced to garble quotations, in order to create a cauſe of objection to his adverſary, what opinion muſt he himſelf entertain of the cauſe, which he undertakes to ſupport? And what opinion muſt his readers entertain of him, when they find themſelves thus groſsly deceived?

It is almoſt unneceſſary to reply to the few trifling remarks, which he has made on the diſmiſſal of Mr. Chauvelin, the negotiation commenced by Dumouriez, or the miſſion of Mr. Maret to England, at the end of January 1793, not only becauſe thoſe ſubjects have been ſo fully examined Ch. XV. that nothing more remains to be ſaid about them, but becauſe none of the events, which took place during the laſt fourteen days before the declaration of war, can for the reaſons already aſſigned, be reckoned among the *cauſes* of it. However I cannot leave wholly unnoticed another artful attempt made by Mr. Belſham, to remove the blame of the rupture from the

French Government. He ſays p. 110, "Not-
"withſtanding the final rejection of the new let-
"ters of credence, and the conſequent recall of
"the Ambaſſador, by the Executive Council,
"the French government had the merit beyond
"any reaſonable expectation of making ano-
"ther effort for peace." Now the effort for peace which Mr. Belſham here means, was ſolely the work of Dumouriez: and the French government, which was then compoſed of Le Brun, Pache, Monge, Claviere, and Garat, (for Roland had then ceaſed to take part in public affairs) was ſo far from having any *merit* in this effort, that three out of the five members oppoſed it with all their power; and Le Brun, though he was too fine a politician to *declare* himſelf againſt it, in which caſe, as he was miniſter for foreign affairs, it could not have been ſet on foot, took care that it ſhould produce no effect. All this is very circumſtantially related in the Memoirs of Dumouriez, who was the mover of the whole buſineſs: and, as I correctly reported in Ch. XV. what Dumouriez had ſaid, Mr. Belſham could hardly have remained in ignorance about it.

Yet,

Yet, in defiance of the evidence of Dumouriez, which is the only evidence we have on this ſubject, Mr. B. would willingly perſuade his readers, that the French *government* had the merit of making the effort, if indeed it can be called a merit, to ſet a negotiation on foot, which probably had nothing elſe for its object, than once more to amuſe the Britiſh government. With regard to Mr. Maret's miſſion to London at the end of January 1793, Mr. Belſham does not pretend to aſſert that Mr. Maret made any *political overtures* whatſoever to the Britiſh miniſtry: on the contrary he admits (p. 110) what indeed it was uſeleſs any longer to deny, that Mr. Maret "content-"ed himſelf with ſending a ſhort note to Lord "Grenville, informing him *that he had come* "*over to take charge of the diplomatic papers in* "*the houſe of the French envoy*." Mr. B. then adds, "Of this his Lordſhip took not the leaſt "notice. Mr. Maret remained therefore in-"cognito in London, till the intelligence ar-"rived of the French declaration of war, "when he ſent a ſecond letter to Lord Gren-"ville, to take leave, and returned to Paris."

Here

Here Mr. Belſham, being obliged to acknowledge that Mr. Maret, inſtead of making any political overtures, merely ſent a note of a *private* nature to Lord Grenville, and being ſenſible therefore that it is of no conſequence to aſk at preſent, what Mr. Maret's inſtructions were,* when Mr. Maret did not even *offer* to produce them, has attempted a new method of throwing blame on the Britiſh cabinet, by complaining that Lord Grenville took no notice of Mr. Maret's *private* note. Now I ſhould be glad to know, what notice a Britiſh Secretary of State, in his public capacity, *could* take of a foreigner, who came over to all appearance as a private individual, and who gave his Lordſhip no other notice, than that he was come over to fetch ſome papers, which the late French miniſter had left behind him? Lord Grenville could have no reaſon even to imagine, that Mr. Maret had any other buſineſs; and he neceſſarily concluded, that Mr.

* "But the fact was, Mr. Maret had very little to ſay, "and that little was partly rendered unimportant by "ſubſequent occurrences." This declaration is made by Mr. Miles, in his Authentic Correſpondence, p. 103.

Maret

Maret gave that notice, merely to obtain an exemption from the operation of the alien bill, till his bufinefs was finifhed. And this exemption really was obtained by the notice: for Mr. Maret was fuffered to remain and actually did remain in London, (though without making any effort at a negotiation) till the intelligence arrived of the declaration of war, when it was ufelefs to remain any longer. Mr. Belfham's laft effort therefore to throw blame on the Britifh miniftry for their conduct to Mr. Maret, is as falfe, as all the other trials, which have been made with this now-exhaufted fubject.

Before I conclude I beg leave to fay a few words on Mr. Belfham's unwarranted manner of quoting paffages. Only a few pages before, I gave an inftance of his falfifying a paffage in my work, by fuppreffing the hypothetical claufe, in order to convert an hypothetical propofition into an abfolute one: and this is very far from being the only inftance,*

* I do not ufe the word "innumerable," as Mr. B. does, becaufe I reckon only what I have actually counted.

in which Mr. Belſham has taken liberties of this kind. At the very beginning of his pamphlet (p. 2.) he has quoted incorrectly a paſſage from Ch. X. Note 28, and has groſsly miſrepreſented the application of it: for I really applied it to the *ſpecious profeſſions of the French*, whereas, according to Mr. Belſham's repreſentation, I applied it to the *origin of the war*. At p. 19, he has given another quotation* from my work, which is far from being a faithful tranſcript, ſeveral parts of it being omitted, which were neceſſary to give ſtrength to my argument. In p. 35, &c. he has given a very garbled copy of Mr. Chauvelin's note. At p. 79, he has again both inaccurately quoted, and unfairly repreſented a paſſage in my Hiſtory. But he has taken a ſtill greater liberty with a paſſage in the letter, which was written by Dumouriez to Miranda, on January 23, 1793, and which is printed in

* I confine myſelf at preſent to ſuch quotations, as Mr. B. has printed with *inverted commas*, by which the reader is given to underſtand, that he is preſented not merely with the ſenſe, but with the *very words* of the quoted author, exactly as they ſtand in the original.

the Correſpondance de Miranda, p. 15.—The paſſage in the original is as follows: "On "envoie demain un agent ſecret fort connu de "Mr. Pitt, *et de Mr. Fox,* pour demander *aux* "*deux partis, c'eſt-à-dire à la nation toute en-*"*tiere*, un ſauf conduit pour moi, et l'aſſurance "d'être bien venu, quelque ſuccès qu' ait la "miſſion." With theſe very words likewiſe, I quoted the paſſage in Ch. XV. Note 64, and pointed out the tendency of the expreſſions which I have here printed in italicks. Mr. Belſham, therefore, in repeating this paſſage, thought proper to ſuppreſs thoſe inconvenient expreſſions, and to give the following quotation as the faithful tranſcript of a paſſage in *a* Letter of Dumouriez to Miranda.* "On

* He has taken care not to let his readers know in *what* Letter, though, in regard to a queſtion in the very ſame place, from the Memoirs of Dumouriez, which is *correct*, he has told his readers the very page where it is to be found. But even here, though he intended to tell them right, he has unfortunately told them wrong: for in copying from my Hiſtory, whence his quotations from Dumouriez, and indeed almoſt all his quotations are borrowed, he has written p. 121 inſtead of p. 131.

"envoie

"envoie* un agent secret fort connu de Mr. "Pitt, pour demander un sauf conduit pour "moi, et l'assurance d'être bien venu, &c." Now if the clauses which Mr. Belsham has suppressed, had either preceded or followed the words which he has quoted, I should have passed over his quotation in silence. If he judged it to his purpose to quote only *one* passage from the Letter of Dumouriez, he was at perfect liberty to do so: but he was surely bound by the laws of honour to give that passage as he found it, and not to suppress whole clauses in the *middle* of the passage, without using any line or mark, to signify that something was omitted. In fact, want of fidelity in the quotation of documents is the greatest offence of which an historian can be guilty. Where no authorities are produced, and the reader is obliged therefore to trust to the bare word of the historian, it is even in that case unpardonable to abuse the confidence of the reader, and to assert, as indisputably true, what is not derived from authentic informa-

* Mr. B. has here omitted "demain;" but *this* omission was probably a mere oversight.

tion.

tion. But when an author pretends to exhibit the very ſource of his intelligence, and thus raiſes the confidence of the reader to the higheſt pitch, what indignation muſt ariſe, when it is diſcovered, that this ſource is polluted? All confidence is then withdrawn: and the reader, diſappointed and diſguſted, will neceſſarily exclaim: If I cannot truſt to the *documents* which my author gives me, how ſhall I truſt to his *bare word?*

Here then I cloſe my defence, and leave it to the public to decide, whether the cauſe, which I had undertaken to ſupport, has loſt or gained by the late attack of Mr. Belſham.

POSTSCRIPT

POSTSCRIPT.

AS it is not my intention to publiſh any more Vindications of the Hiſtory of the Politicks of Great Britain and France, unleſs I ſhould be favoured with ſome remarks that merit particular notice,* I take the preſent

* Though after an interval of two years, ſince my Hiſtory appeared in German, and of one year, ſince it was publiſhed in Engliſh, only *one* voice, the voice of Mr. Belſham, has been heard againſt it; yet, as it is poſſible, that either he himſelf may return to the charge, or that ſome other perſon may attempt to ſupport him, I think it neceſſary to come to ſome explanation, in order to prevent uſeleſs diſquiſitions. As the *facts*, which I have produced, ſpeak in general ſo ſtrongly for themſelves, that, when they are fairly ſtated, there can be hardly more than one opinion about them, the only method of confuting the grand inference deduced from my Hiſtory is to *diſprove* thoſe facts. But, as documents are produced in their ſupport, the only method of diſproving the facts is to

prove,

present opportunity of adding a document of the greatest importance, which was unknown to me when I wrote my History, and for which I am indebted to a gentleman

prove, that the documents are *false*; that is, that they are not contained in the Moniteur, and other journals, from which I state them to have been taken. On this subject however I have been so very accurate, and have throughout the whole History so distinctly informed the reader of the places, to which he is to turn, in order to compare the originals with my copies of them, that it must be his own fault, if he ever *doubts*, whether I have given him faithful documents. ——As to any attempt, which may be made, to produce new facts, as a set-off against the old ones, I question whether it be possible, after the subject has been so exhausted, to discover any one fact of importance, hitherto unknown, which took place *before* the middle of January 1793: and it would be useless to bring any thing forward, which happened *after* that period, because, as the question of peace or war was then fully decided, it could not be reckoned among the *causes* of the war. But even *if* any unknown fact, which took place before that period, could now be brought to light, that fact must be a very strong one indeed, to serve as a counterpoise to any *one* of the numerous

man, who is well known both in England and in America, as a diſtinguiſhed political writer.

In the ſpring of 1793, after the war had broken out between Great Britain and France, and when a Miniſter Plenipotentiary from the French Republic to the United States of America was underſtood to be on his paſſage, the Preſident (Waſhington) did, on the 18th of April, addreſs

numerous important facts on the other ſide: and it would ſtill leave a very conſiderable balance in favour of the Britiſh government. Such diſcoveries are indeed highly improbable: but I think it neceſſary to notice at preſent every *poſſible* attempt, and to place it beforehand in its proper light, becauſe it is not my intention, (with the reſtriction however above-mentioned) to trouble the reader with a ſecond Vindication. The one, which Mr. Belſham's remarks have occaſioned, will I hope convince him that I *can* vindicate myſelf when it is neceſſary: but for this purpoſe, it is by no means neceſſary to have, in all caſes, the laſt word.

the

the following queſtions to the three Secretaries and the Attorney General, who on all important occaſions formed his Council of State.

Queſtion 1. Shall a Miniſter from the *Republic* of France be received?

Anſwer. Yes.

Queſtion 2. Shall the United States conſider the treaties heretofore made with France, as applying to the preſent ſituation of the parties? May they renounce them, or hold them ſuſpended, till the government of France ſhall be eſtabliſhed?

Anſwer. They may do either: but it will be beſt to conſider them as applying to the preſent ſituation of the parties.

Queſtion

Queſtion 3. Is the Guarantee in the Treaty of Alliance applicable to a *defenſive* war only? *Anſwer.* Yes.

Queſtion 4. Is the war in which France is now * engaged, offenſive or defenſive, on her part: or is it of a mixed and equivocal character?——*Anſwer.* The war, in which France is now engaged, is *entirely and unequivocally* OFFENSIVE on her part.

In conſequence of theſe anſwers a proclamation was immediately iſſued, declaring that the United States would remain neutral toward all the powers at war.

Here then we have the verdict of a foreign Government, ſitting in judgment on the queſtion:

* Namely, in April 1793.

queſtion: Who were the aggreſſors in the preſent war? It is moreover the Verdict of a Government, which cannot be ſuſpected of a bias in favour of Great Britain:* it is laſtly the Verdict of a Government, to which thoſe very Gentlemen, who are the moſt unwilling to acquit the Britiſh Cabinet, pay in general the greateſt deference; and *this* Government pronounced the following ſentence: The war is *entirely and unequivocally* OFFENSIVE on the part of *France*.——The warmeſt advocates therefore of that country, muſt abandon all hopes of ever obtaining, from an *impartial* jury, a verdict in her favour.

* Mr. Jefferſon in particular, who was one of the council, which delivered this verdict, is well-known for his partiality to France.

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